

' A comparative survey of interrelated themes in  
the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles, the Gregorius of  
Hartmann von Aue, and Der Erwählte of Thomas Mann.'

By

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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, and to the best of my knowledge and belief the thesis contains no copy or paraphrase of material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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# I

This thesis will be concerned with a comparison of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex, Hartmann's Gregorius and Thomas Mann's Der Erwählte, and with surveying the ethical and metaphysical views of each author with particular respect to the incest motif.

The legend of Oedipus as recounted by Sophocles in the Theban trilogy runs as follows: To the King of Thebes, Laius, and his wife Jocasta, a son is born. Even before the child's birth the oracle of Apollo had predicted that he would eventually kill his father and marry his mother. In the hope of thwarting this ominous prediction Oedipus' parents decide that the only sure way lies in killing the infant. They lack the necessary courage to commit the deed themselves and hand the child over to a shepherd with orders to pierce its feet with an iron pin and expose it on a mountain side. The shepherd too cannot bring himself to abandon the child wantonly, and instead he entrusts it to the care of a fellow-shepherd who is to take it away beyond the borders of Thebes and there to rear it as his own son. Eventually the Corinthian shepherd, a servant of the ruler, Polybus, brings the child to his royal master. Polybus and his wife Merope, being childless themselves, welcome the infant and adopt him as their own. On account of the swollen condition of his feet they name him Oedipus. (Another variant name which has been postulated is 'Oedipais' - 'son of the swelling sea')<sup>(i)</sup> As royal prince, Oedipus grows up in ignorance of his true parents.

(i) Robert Graves: The Greek Myths, Penguin, 1955, Vol. 2, p. 9

As a young man he hears by chance from the oracle of Apollo the evil prediction concerning him and flees from the house of his foster-parents in the hope of thus giving lie to the oracle, in much the same way as his parents had tried to do before him. During his wanderings he encounters a traveller on a lonely road (his father, unbeknown to him), and in the ensuing quarrel slays him. He returns eventually to Thebes and finds the city plagued by the Sphinx who kills all who cannot answer her riddle. By giving the correct answer Oedipus frees the city and then becomes its ruler, marrying his mother. They live together in this way for some fifteen years when once again plague and pestilence beset the city. The Oedipus Rex opens at this point with the elders imploring Oedipus for help in their plight. Oedipus sends Creon, his brother-in-law, to consult the oracle. On his return Creon reveals that the plague is caused by the domicile of a regicide within the city. Creon's words are substantiated by the blind prophet, Teiresias, who indicates in unequivocal terms that Oedipus is the guilty one. Gradually and inexorably the whole truth is unfolded. Jocasta commits suicide and Oedipus, after putting out his eyes, goes into exile. At this juncture the play ends.

The legend of Gregorius, 'der guote sündære', as related by Hartmann in his verse epic, is as follows: The wife of the Duke of Aquitania dies in giving birth to twins, a boy and girl. On his own deathbed, ten years later, the Duke entrusts the girl to the care of her brother. The siblings drift into an incestuous relationship and the sister becomes pregnant. The youth leaves his land

to go on a pilgrimage and Gregorius' birth takes place in secrecy, and he is set adrift on the sea in a chest which contains a tablet setting out the circumstances of his birth but leaving the names of the sinful parents anonymous. The infant is found and reared by an abbot in a monastery. He later learns of the circumstances of his birth and quits the monastery to become a knight. In his subsequent travels Gregorius comes to his mother's land which is besieged by a rejected suitor. He overcomes the invader and marries the queen, his mother. The incest is discovered after some years and an agonised parting takes place. Gregorius goes away to do penance and is chained on a rock in a lake for seventeen years, during which time he is miraculously sustained. The scene moves to Rome where the Pope has died and no agreement can be reached on his successor. It is revealed simultaneously to two Roman patricians that Gregorius is to be the next Pope. Gregorius is eventually located, and after being told of the miraculous restoration of the key to his chains, he accepts the elevation. He becomes renowned as a Pope of justness, moderation and humility. His mother comes to Rome to be absolved of her sins and a joyful recognition takes place.

Though no evidence of direct filiation can be shown, there are other legends which, in certain features, show themal similarities with the Gregorius legend. There is firstly the legend of Andrew of Crete which relates how it is prophesied that Andrew will slay his father and wed his mother. As with Gregorius, Andrew voluntarily

undergoes great penance and suffers great spiritual torment before being elevated to the Bishopric of Crete.

A second somewhat similar legend is the eleventh century Persian Schachname of Firdausi. This relates how the king, Behmen-dirâz-dast, names his daughter-wife, Humâi, as his successor, thus causing his son to flee the court. Shortly after the king's death Humâi gives birth to a son who is placed in a richly jewelled chest and then exposed on the Euphrates. He is found and adopted by a fuller, but shows little inclination to his foster-father's trade and is eventually told by his foster-mother that he is a foundling. He distinguishes himself in the army, is recognised by the Queen as her son, and is named heir to the throne.

There is also the legend of Judas in which the exposure of the son is motivated by a dream that he will slay his parents. The legend tells how on returning home Judas slays his father and marries his mother. On learning of her identity he flees and joins the disciples of Jesus.

The early Celtic legend of St. Brendan exhibits many parallels with the Gregorius. The legend recounts how Brendan encounters a hermit on a rock in the sea. The hermit has been miraculously sustained by God for ninety-nine years, and is described as being naked except for his long hair, resembling a bear in appearance. (Mann has Gregorius resembling a 'borstiges Igeltier' and clad only in his 'härenes Büsserhemd'.) This hermit had once ruled as king of Pamphilia and Cappadocia and had married his sister who had borne him two sons, one of whom the father

slew.His wife and the remaining son were struck dead by lightning.

In its essential outline,the tale as related by Thomas Mann remains virtually unchanged.The novelist has summarised it in the following words:

' Der Erwählte ist ein legendärer Roman, dessen Handlung in den Hauptzügen dem Versepos Gregorius von Hartmann von Aue folgt, der seinerseits sein Werk einer altfranzösischen Vorlage nachgedichtet hat.Hier ist der Erzähler ein irischer Mönch, der als Gast des Klosters Sankt Gallen im Alemannenland die Geschichte zu seiner und seiner Leser Unterhaltung und Erbauung aufzeichnet.Gregorius oder Grigorss ist die Frucht der Sünde, erzeugt von einem Geschwisterpaar, Sibylla und Willigis, den Kindern Grimalds, des Herzogs eines Reiches Flandern-Artois. Er wird bald nach seiner Geburt aufs Meer ausgesetzt und wächst heran auf einer normannischen Insel, wo ein frommer Abt sich seiner annimmt.Dieser bewahrt ihm die Tafel auf der die Bewandnisse seiner Geburt in allgemeinen Zügen geschrieben stehen.Mit siebzehn Jahren wird er durch Zufall wissend über die Art seiner Herkunft und verlässt die Insel, um seine Heimat und seine Eltern zu suchen.Er gerät in das Land seiner Mutter, das sich durch einen von ihr verschmähten Freier in Kriegsnot befindet, besiegt diesen Fürsten im Zweikampf und wird des Landes Herzog als Gatte der eigenen Mutter.Es kommt zur Entdeckung dieses komplizierten Greuels. Sie führt zu einer unerhörten Busse, nach welcher



Gott den aus Sünde Entsprossenen und so tief in Sünde Getauchten durch ein Gnadenwunder auf den päpstlichen Stuhl erhöht...' (i)

The story as related by Mann is in much more detail than the mediaeval epic. The novelist has changed many of the names and has generally elaborated and embroidered on the verse epic.

In considering the sources for Mann's novel the author himself freely acknowledges his debt to Hartmann in a passage at the end of his epilogue to the novel:

'Diese Erzählung gründet sich in den Hauptzügen auf das Versepos Gregorius des mittelhochdeutschen Dichters Hartmann von Aue, der seine Geschichte 'vom guten Sünder' aus dem Französischen (Vie de Saint-Grégoire) übernahm.' (ii)

On his 'discovery' of the legend Mann has written:

'Meine erste Berührung mit der Gregoriuslegende fiel in die Zeit der Arbeit am Doktor Faustus. Dawals war ich auf der Suche nach produktiven Motiven für Adrian Leverkühn und las in der alten Buche Gesta Romanorum...Tatsächlich gefiel sie (die Geschichte) mir so gut dass ich mir gleich damals vornahm, sie dem Helden meines Romans eines Tages wegzunehmen und selber etwas daraus zu machen.' (iii)

And in his Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus Mann refers

(i) Thomas Mann: D.E., Fischer Verlag, 1956, p.1

(ii) Ibid.p.288 (iii) Bemerkungen zu dem Roman 'Der Erwählte' in Thomas Mann: Altes und Neues, kleine Prosa aus fünf Jahrzehnten, Frankfurt, 1953, p.258 et seq.

to his intention of writing 'einen Kleinen archaischen Roman' around the legend.<sup>(i)</sup> It seems clear that Mann had for some time considered writing a more lengthy treatment of the Gregorius legend than the brief place accorded to it in the guise of a musical puppet play in the Doktor Faustus.

Mann has borrowed freely from other well-known French works. For example he effectively illustrates the seduction scene of the third chapter with a quotation from the middle twelfth century religious drama Le jeu d'Adam which deals with the tempting of Eve. Again in the eleventh chapter the description of Grigorss' dream bears a close affinity to a similar passage in the Arthurian Yvain of Chrétien de Troyes which Hartmann adapted for his Iwein.

The following section is intended to try to show by reference to common motifs that a closer relationship exists between the Greek and the mediaeval legends than is generally recognised.

There are firstly the two principal connecting themes: the incest and exposure. The Greek work has just one instance of the former - an unwitting liaison between Oedipus and Jocasta. In Hartmann's poem the incest appears twice: firstly as a deliberate act between the siblings, and secondly as an unwitting incest of mother and son. In one sense both the Greek and the mediaeval heroes are 'Schicksalskinder': as an infant Oedipus is deliberately exposed and 'marked', as it were, by the

(i) Die Entstehung des D.F., Frankfurt, 1949, p. 130

piercing of his feet. Gregorius is committed to the waves in a chest and his story accompanies him on a tablet. The second instance of exposure in the mediaeval epic is the voluntary chaining of Gregorius to the rock.

The validity of a themal link as far as the parricide is concerned is much more tenuous. There is however perhaps an indirect parallel: As a youth Oedipus slays his father in ignorance. The birth of Gregorius, by the nature of its shameful circumstances, causes his father to flee the court, and he dies shortly afterwards of a broken heart.

Hartmann relates:

' daz ir bruoder waere tôt.  
 der tôt kam im von seneder nôt..niuwan  
 die minne eine diu im ein zil des  
 tôdes was..'(i)

While Mann writes that:

' Das Scheiden von seiner süßen Schwester, seinem  
 Weibe hatte ihm hart und zehrend ans Leben  
 gegriffen, und zur strengen Fahrt auf Kreuzritter-  
 schaft war er in der Seele nicht wohl gewappnet..  
 Dem aber war das Herz gebrochen, den zweiten Tag  
 gab er den Geist auf.' (ii)

All three works have a further link in common, though in the mediaeval poem no direct parallelism can be discerned. The Oedipus Rex begins with the revelation that the city of Thebes is visited with plague and pestilence. The cause is revealed by the seer Teiresias: the incest and parricide are essentially unnatural and grave offences against the gods. In both Hartmann's and Mann's treatment it is related that the city of Gregorius' (i) Gregorius:vs.829-30,849-50 (ii) Der Erwählte:p.64

mother is in dire straits from a siege laid by a rejected suitor:

' daz ir niht m<sup>e</sup> beleip  
 niuwan eine ir houbestat.  
 diu was ouch als<sup>o</sup> besat  
 mit tegel<sup>i</sup>cher huote..' (i)

While Hartmann stresses that by rejecting marriage, the sister is serving God and making penitential atonement for her sins, Mann seems to lay emphasis more on the fact that her seclusion is something unnatural. The narrator, Clemens suggests, ironically in the light of the events which follow, that by her behaviour she is, in a sense, offending both her people and God:

' ..so reifte sie doch, auf Erden die Z<sup>u</sup>ge ihres toten Bruders bewahrend..was, glaube ich zu wissen, auch nach ihrem Willen war, dass Gott sich gr<sup>a</sup>me, weil sie einen so sch<sup>o</sup>nen Leib keinem Gatten g<sup>o</sup>nn<sup>u</sup>te, sondern ihres Bruders b<sup>u</sup>ssende Witwe blieb..Das betr<sup>u</sup>bte Hof, Stadt und Land, wie es auch Gott betr<sup>u</sup>bte, denn es betr<sup>u</sup>ben sollte, ob er gleich gegen so viel b<sup>u</sup>ssende Enthaltung auch wieder nichts einzuwenden haben konnte.' (ii)

In one other respect Mann, though diverging from Hartmann, shows a possible themal similarity with the Greek work. Robert Graves, in his exegesis of the myth, describes the childless marriage of Laius and Jocasta in this way:

'Grieved by his [Laius'] prolonged childlessness he secretly consulted the Delphic Oracle which informed

(i) Gregorius:vs.916-20 (ii) Der Erw<sup>a</sup>hlte:p.67-68

' him that this seeming misfortune was really a blessing because any child born to Jocasta would become his murderer.' (i)

This theme is not found in the mediaeval poem, however Mann has the following:

' Nur eines, spricht er notgedrungen, fehlte, ihr Glück vollkommen zu machen: das waren Kinder, und wie oft sah man die Gatten auf Sammetkissen nebeneinander knien, die Hände zum Himmel ringend um das Vorenthaltens!..denn es waren beide schon vierzig, und noch immer verzog die Hoffnung auf Nachkommenschaft und geraden Erbgang..' (ii)

A curious though probably insignificant similarity may be observed in the parentage-suspicion theme. Oedipus has, of course, no reason, up to the time of the revelation, to suspect that Polybus and Merope are not his true parents:

' Listen then. My father was a Corinthian, Polybus. My mother a Dorian, Merope. At home I rose to be a person of some pre-eminence.' (iii)

Gregorius similarly thinks that the fisherman and his wife are his parents:

' unz er den itewiz vernam  
und unwizzender dinge kam  
gar an ein ende,  
daz er ellende  
waere in dem lande..' (iv)

(i) Robert Graves: The Greek Myths, Vol. 2, pp. 9-10 (ii) Der Erwählte: p. 17 (iii) The Theban Plays: 47 (iv) Gregorius: vs. 1370ff.

Oedipus reacts angrily when he mistakenly imagines that Jocasta is ashamed of what she believes to be his humble lineage (She is in fact terrified at the imminent revelation of the incest and father-killing):

' Though I be proved slave-born to the third generation, your honour is not impugned.. Go, someone; fetch the shepherd. Leave the lady to enjoy her pride of birth.. The woman, with more than woman's pride, is shamed by my low origin. '(i)

Gregorius, addressing his mother, similarly abuses and threatens the man who, he thinks, has been telling false tales to her about the circumstances of his birth:

' iu hât etewer gesaget  
daz ich sî ein ungeboren man.  
weste ich wer iuch dar an  
alsus geleidet haete,  
ezn gelaegen mîne raete  
niemer unz ûf sînen tôt:  
nû hel sich wol, des ist im nôt.  
swer er ist, er hât gelogen. '(ii)

In equally forceful tone Mann's Grigorss repudiates the idea that he is of low birth and common lineage:

' Hat ein Feind, ein schleichender, Euch berichtet,  
ich sei ein niedrig geborener Mann, aus der Hütte?  
Nunn, denn, welcher Uhu und Schuft Euch das ein-  
gegeben und Euch so zu Leide gebracht - er lügt. '(iii)

The following chapters will attempt to appraise and outline the essential differences in ethical and metaphysical outlook of each author in his approach to the legendary subject-matter.

(i) The Theban Plays: p. 55 (ii) Greg. vs. 2576ff. (iii) D.E. p. 192

## II

In this and the following two chapters an attempt will be made to analyse and compare Sophocles' ethic and metaphysical views with those of Hartmann and Thomas Mann. An appreciation of Sophocles' ethical outlook as revealed in the Theban trilogy may be gained from three principal sources within the work: Firstly, the impersonal lyric odes of the chorus; secondly, the significant personal utterances of the chorus, and finally by a consideration of Sophocles' treatment of the legend as a whole.

A superficial consideration of the Oedipus Rex might well tempt the reader to label Sophocles a pessimist. Through no apparent fault of his own Oedipus has unwittingly committed incest and parricide. For these deeds he is punished in a most terrible way. On the surface it seems to matter little what Oedipus does: his stature is that of a puppet manipulated at will by malevolent gods, hence the widely held belief of many that this work represents external control and predestination in their most autocratic and absolute form. I shall try to show that such a viewpoint cannot, however, be justified when a closer analysis of the play is made, with particular regard to the author's ethical views.

Apart from the incest and father-killing, Oedipus is revealed to have committed at least five other transgressions against the Greek gods. These are exhibited in his excessive pride, stubbornness, self-will, unreasoning anger and blind optimism. His immoderate pride is witnessed by the manner in which he constantly defends his high birth and repudiates what he believes to be false allegations about the true circumstances of his exposure

and adoption. His unreasoning anger and stubbornness are shown by the way in which he refuses to let the aged traveller pass him on a lonely road. His anger turns to uncontrollable rage and he slays the traveller only to discover later that he has killed his own father. These characteristics may be seen also in the scene, referred to earlier, where Oedipus, in a furious tirade, abuses the blind prophet Teiresias for revealing what later transpires to be the truth. His myopic optimism is apparent in the scene where he blithely assures Jocasta that all will turn out for the best while he himself is becoming less and less certain of the truth all the time. As a result of his offensive hybris and its attendant sins, Oedipus is struck down. The issue which raises itself is this: To what degree can Oedipus be held morally responsible for the acts of incest and parricide which he has committed? He has certainly slain his father, but in ignorance of the truth, and has married his mother, again unwittingly. He remains nonetheless a marked and guilty man, remarking as he enters his exile: 'Let no man call himself happy until that day when he carries his happiness down to the grave in peace.' (i)

In order to evaluate Sophocles' ethical attitude toward the two principal issues - incest and parricide - it is critical to define the playwright's concept of the 'gods' to which he alludes frequently throughout the trilogy. It is obvious that the Greek viewpoint is wholly removed from Hartmann's Christian concept of one omnipotent and transcendental God, in conflict with and ultimately prevailing over his adversary, the Devil. For

(i) The Theban Plays: p.68



Sophocles, the gods of which he speaks represent partly those natural and universal laws which prevail in the domain of human existence: such forces, for example, as love, hatred, jealousy and envy. Thus when Sophocles says that a god is at work he intends his audience to understand that one of these natural laws has entered the sphere of human action. To exemplify this concept: it is seen in the Antigone how Creon has buried Antigone alive as a punishment for her defiance of his order to leave unburied her brother's corpse. By his cruel and unnatural deed Creon has turned filial affection into savage hatred, and Haemon, as a direct consequence, tries to take his father's life. Here, at the human level, the working of a Sophoclean god is witnessed: Creon has upset the natural order of things and retributive justice is inevitable, meted out here through the medium of Haemon's anger. The essential characteristic of the Sophoclean gods is that they are not transcendental in nature but immanent and effective at all times in the sphere of human events.

The gods exist not only on the level of human action but also on a wider cosmic level where their role is to preserve balance and order within the universe. It is to this wider, universal function of the gods that the philosopher Heraclitus alludes when he writes to the effect that the sun will not overstep its allotted bounds, if it were to attempt to do so the Erinyes, the Handmaidens of Justice, would seek it out and restrain it. By committing incest and parricide Oedipus has offended natural laws and because of this he must be punished, even though, ethically considered, he cannot strictly be held responsible. Sophocles' gods are amoral in nature - they represent real and actual forces in human life and thus

lie outside the sphere of ethics and morality. The justice of the gods is ineluctable and dispensed without regard to the degree of moral guilt or innocence of the individual. To label Oedipus 'guilty' or 'innocent' would be to impute to the gods the faculty of moral judgment but it is essentially against the natural order and the laws of the universe that Oedipus has transgressed. A second example of the working of the gods' justice is found in the initial scene of the Oedipus Rex where the Theban elders are shown imploring Oedipus to help free the city of its plague. In despair Oedipus sends Creon to consult the Pythian Oracle and the answer comes back: 'There is an unclean thing, born and nursed on our soil, which must be driven away, not kept to destroy us.'<sup>(i)</sup> The implication is unequivocal: the pestilence is a direct consequence of Oedipus' offences. The wrath of the gods can be placated only by the banishment of the offender. Given this, the central issue which raises itself is : Do the Sophoclean gods countenance the father-killing and incest, and if they do ordain these offences how can the punishment of Oedipus be justified? If Oedipus is in fact nothing more than a mere puppet in the hands of a set of malevolent gods and forced into a state of 'innocent' guilt, then the viewpoint that the playwright is a pessimist would seem to be justly held. If however one dissociates the hero's actual deeds - his 'objective' guilt as it were - from the accompanying motivation - the 'subjective' guilt - then it becomes clearly apparent that the gods bear him no personal malevolence, and that they are in fact non-ethical in character, hence Sophocles

(i) The Theban Plays: p.28

cannot justifiably be called a pessimist. The playwright shows that the gods do not compel Oedipus to act in one particular way or another - this he does freely and from personal motivation - but since his wrongdoing offends and upsets the natural laws the balance must be restored and hence he is punished regardless of the subjective innocence associated with the deeds. The playwright tends to stress the actual physical suffering of his hero, and in this respect contrasts with Hartmann who tends to emphasise more the spiritual torment which Gregorius undergoes. The degree of Oedipus' suffering is in proportion to the gravity of his offences. Incest and parricide are heinous crimes and his suffering, both physical and mental will be accordingly heightened. It is shown as sort of double-torture of mind and body:

' O dark intolerable, inescapable night that has no day! O and again that piercing pain, torture in the flesh and in the soul's dark memory.' (i)

The theme of dual torment is subsequently followed up and reinforced by the chorus when it reflects on the horror of Oedipus' self-inflicted punishment:

' It must be so; such suffering must needs be twice borne, once in the body and once in the spirit .. twice tormented: in the spirit as in the flesh.' (ii)

For such terrible offences as Oedipus has committed, the retributive justice will be commensurately violent. This is clearly borne out in the playwright's depiction of the scene where Oedipus blinds himself:

' Her dress was pinned with golden brooches which the king snatched out and thrust, from full arm's

(i) The Theban Plays: p.62      (ii) Ibid., p.62

length,into his eyes: eyes that should no longer see his shame,his guilt..to this wild tune he pierced his eyeballs time and time again till bloody tears ran down his beard - a whole cascade descending in drenching cataracts of scarlet rain.'(i)

The horror of the scene is re-echoed in the words of the attendant who describes the discovery of Jocasta's suicide:

' We saw a strangled woman swinging before our eyes.

The king saw too,and with heart-rending groans untied the rope and laid her on the ground.'(ii)

Those who seek to see in Sophocles' play evidence of a pessimistic outlook would cite the above scenes and the following words of the chorus after it has witnessed the queen's suicide and Oedipus' self-blinding:

' All the generations of mortal man add up to nothing.Show me the man whose happiness is more than illusion.Here is the instance,Oedipus,here is the reason why I will call no man happy..When the same bosom enfolded the son and the father, could not the engendering clay have shouted aloud its indignation?,'(iii)

But to call the playwright a pessimist is to overlook the whole ethic purpose which underpins the play.What Sophocles is trying to show is that while 'good' deeds will not necessarily be rewarded,as in the Christian sense,'evil' deeds(in Sophoclean terms:offences against the natural order of things) will certainly not remain unpunished.This does not make Sophocles a pessimist,nor does it make him an optimist.It does however demonstrate that his world is ruled neither by arbitrary,malevolent gods,nor is it ordered by chance.

The Oedipus Rex shows how ambition,power and even love

(i) The Theban Plays: p.61 (ii)Ibid.,p.61 (iii)Ibid.,p.59

can destroy as well as elevate. The clearest intellect is by no means a sure guide through the perplexities of the human condition. Paradoxically it is Oedipus, renowned for his intelligence and far-sightedness who remains blind to the truth, while it is given to the blind seer, Teiresias, to enlighten him:

' You are pleased to mock my blindness. Have you eyes and do not see your own damnation. Eyes and cannot see what company you keep? Those now clear-seeing eyes shall be darkened.' (i)

The chorus reiterates this theme in the closing scene of the play where Oedipus pronounces his own banishment:

' Sons and daughters of Thebes, behold: this was Oedipus. Greatest of men, he held the key to the deepest mysteries, was envied by all his fellow men for his great prosperity; behold what a full tide of misfortune swept over his head. Then learn that mortal man must always look to his ending, and none can be called happy until that day he carries his happiness down to the grave.' (ii)

The cosmic aspect of the Sophoclean theocracy is presided over by Zeus whom the playwright holds to be the arbiter of reason and order within the universe. The chorus in the Antigone says of Zeus:

' For what presumption of man can match thy power, O Zeus, that art not subject to sleep, or time or age, living forever in bright Olympus. Tomorrow and for all time to come, as in the past this law is immutable.' (iii)

The Oedipus Rex shows the working of the gods at two levels: on one hand they are immanent and effective at

(i) The Theban Plays: p.37 (ii) Ibid., p.68 (iii) Ibid., p.142

the human level, working through the interplay of emotions, and on the other hand they have a cosmic role. The mediaeval poem and Mann's novel both reiterate that for the deeds of Gregorius there is no place. Mann describes the incest as 'unstatthaft' and the resulting infant as having 'keine Stätte'. The Greek play, on a wider level conveys broadly the same concept: Oedipus by his deeds has disturbed the natural order. Both his motivation (pride, stubbornness, self-will) and the deeds themselves are offensive to the gods. For some time it even seems as if they will pass unpunished, but retribution is sure, and is summoned by the chorus, as it were, when the revelation of the truth is imminent:

' Zeus! If thou livest, all-ruling, all-pervading,  
awake: old oracles are out of mind; Apollo's  
name denied, his glory fading, there is no god-  
liness in all mankind.' (i)

This is a challenge indeed to the gods and they respond swiftly. The next scene witnesses the terrible unravelling and the bloody remorse of the mother and son. Sophocles is vividly demonstrating that his world is not chaotic and governed by chance, but ordered and ruled by a set of all-powerful, ever-vigilant, natural and universal laws to which the loose generic designation of 'gods' is given.

The oracles have a special role to play in the Sophoclean system. Following the traditional belief held from the time of Homer, Sophocles attributes to Zeus and to his son Apollo the power of omniscience. They can and frequently do communicate their prior knowledge of future events to humans principally through the medium of the oracle. The centrality of the oracles in the ethic of the  
(i) The Theban Plays: p.80

playwright resides in the fact that they represent to him a justification of the gods in which he places his belief. If the oracular predictions are shown to be false, then there is no valid reason for believing in the gods. The idea that the supremacy of Reason and Order cannot be doubted or questioned is clearly implied in the passage of the Oedipus Rex where the chorus states:

' Farewell, O heart of Earth, inviolate shrine, if at this time your omens fail or falter, and man no longer own your voice divine.' (i)

Both Oedipus and Jocasta seek at first to decry the oracle. When a messenger brings the apparently good news of Polybus' death (from natural causes) Jocasta is quick to mock:

' Where are you now, divine prognostications? Hear this man's news; and when you have heard it, say what has become of the famous oracles.' (ii)

In his turn Oedipus says triumphantly:

' Well, well... so wife, what of the Pythian fire, the oracles, the prophesying birds that scream above us? I was to kill my father; now he lies in his grave and here am I who never touched a weapon... the letter is unfulfilled and lies like Polybus, dead.' (iii)

Jocasta goes further and not only denies the validity of the oracles but implies that the universe is governed by chance:

' Chance rules our lives, and the future is all unknown. Best live as best we may, from day to day.' (iv)

But Sophocles' audience is only too aware that the gods are about to exact their punishment on Oedipus. Apart from (i) The Theban Plays: p.50 (ii) Ibid., p.51 (iii) Ibid., p.52 (iv) Ibid., 52

demonstrating his own firm belief in the inviolability of the oracles, Sophocles is, at the same time, criticising the lack of faith which he saw, or thought to see in certain of his contemporaries. The playwright further evidences his belief in the power of oracles by making them the framework for several of his plays. The Electra, Oedipus Rex, and Oedipus at Colonus all begin with the dramatic announcement of an oracular prediction and each sees the complete fulfilment of the prediction. The Oedipus Rex illustrates in a particularly striking way the ineluctability of the oracle. The attempt to thwart the fulfilment both by the initial exposure and by the later departure of Oedipus from Corinth is abortive and the prediction is substantiated in a spectacular manner.

The unequivocal condemnation by the chorus of the sceptical attitude of Jocasta and Oedipus shows that Sophocles is supporting the traditional Greek religious beliefs against contemporary attacks, and at the same time reinforcing the validity of the oracles. His 'attack' is lent strength by the ultimate triumphant justification of the forces of Order and Reason, as shown in the fulfilment of the prediction. Of secondary importance in the playwright's religious views is the deity of Fate, which he conceives as being the will of the gods. In effect Zeus is the prime agent and Fate is the means whereby his will is carried out. Fortune too is another god of lesser importance. Sophocles sees Fortune as something supernatural, invoked by man to cover his own folly, misfortune or inadequacy. It is called on only by the sceptical or ignorant such as Jocasta (in the scene just referred to).

The Oedipus Rex is a powerfully compelling representation of Sophocles' concept that the world is governed



neither by chance nor fortune, but is shown to be ordered and ruled by the gods collectively. The 'moral', if one can speak of such, is that while life can be enigmatically cruel, there are certain human qualities which should be striven for. These are the traits of humility, moderation and respect for the gods, that is: acceptance of life and the natural laws and forces which prevail in the sphere of human life. This ethical attitude of Sophocles is, perhaps, expressed most explicitly in the words of the concluding choric ode in the Antigone:

' Of happiness the crown and chiefest part is wisdom, and to hold the gods in awe. This is the law that, seeing the stricken heart of pride brought down, we learn when we are old.' (i)

. . .

(i) The Theban Plays: p.162

## III

The following chapter will attempt to outline and analyse Hartmann's ethical views as revealed in the Gregorius, having particular regard to the poet's didacticism, his dualistic outlook, the fusion of secular and spiritual elements, and finally his treatment of the underlying problem of sin and expiation.

The prologue to the verse epic contains much of Hartmann's theoretic moralising, and in addition, presents the basic underlying problem: man's proneness to fall into a state of sinfulness and offers the solution - absolution of sin through the prescribed steps of the Church's teaching. Hartmann is concerned firstly with warning the sinner against the danger of procrastination in regard to repentance:

' swer durch des hellescher gen rât  
den trôst zuo sîner jugent hât  
dâz er dar ûf sündet,  
als in diu jugent schündet,  
daz er gedenket dar an:  
'du bist noch ein junger man,  
aller dîner missetât  
der wirt noch vil guot rât:  
du gebüezest si in dem alter wôl, '  
der gedenket anders denne er sol. '(i)

The key to the soul's cleansing is seen as residing in genuine repentance, contrition and the resolution to try to avoid further sinning:

(i) Gregorius: vs. 7-16

' sô enwart nie mannes missetât  
 ze dirre werlde sô grôz,  
 er enwerde ir ledic unde blôz,  
 ob si in von herzen riuwet  
 und si niht wider niuwet.' (i)

Hartmann emphasises the gravity of the sin of 'desperatio'. This is conceived as being doubt of God's forgiveness, rather than of his existence. It is referred to in three passages of the prologue:

' ez enist dehein sünde mê,  
 man enwerde ir mit der riuwe  
 ledic unde niuwe,  
 schoene unde reine,  
 niuwan der zwîvel eine:  
 der ist ein mortgalle  
 ze dem êwigen valle  
 den nieman mac gestûezen  
 noch wider got gebûezen.. (ii)  
 sô hât der zwîvel im benomen  
 den wuocher der riuwe,  
 daz ist diu wâre triuwe  
 die er ze gote solde hân.. (iii)  
 wan sîner gnâden ist sô vil  
 daz er des niene wil  
 und ez gar verboten hât  
 daz man dūrch deheine missetât  
 an im iht zwîvelhaft bestê.. (iv)

(i) Gregorius:vs.46-50 (ii) Ibid., vs.162-70 (iii) Ibid., vs.74-77 (iv) Ibid., vs.157-61

Towards the end of the epilogue the poet advises that his tale should not be taken as implying that one can sin and then make last-minute reparation, as it were:

' dâ ensol niemer an  
dehein sündiger man  
genemen boesez bilde,  
sî er gote wilde,  
daz er iht gedenke alsô:  
'nû wis dû vrevel unde vrô:  
wie soldest dû verwâzen wesen?', (i)

It has been put forward by some that Hartmann, in writing the Gregorius, may have wished to 'compensate' for the two earlier secular works: the Erec and the Bûchlein. This view would seem to be lent strength by the opening lines of the epic:

' Mîn herze hât betwungen  
dicke mîne zungen,  
daz si des vil gesprochen hât  
daz nâch der werlde lône stât:  
daz rieten im diu tumben jâr.' (ii)

It seems likely that, in any case, the poet was seeking to enforce, through the poem, the Church's doctrine that the worst sins may be expiated and the soul relieved and comforted by carrying out the prescribed steps of repentance, confession and atonement (vs. 46-50).

A further passage of the poem would appear to suggest that the poet, by his negative inactivity, feels that he has brought sinfulness upon himself:

' daz gotes wille waere,  
und daz diu grôze swaere

(i) Gregorius: vs. 3963-69 (ii) Ibid., vs. 1-5

der süntlichen bürde  
 ein teil ringer würde  
 die ich durch mîne müezekeit  
 ûf mich mit Worten hân geleit..' (i)

In certain passages of his prologue Hartmann becomes allegorical, for example where he takes subject matter reminiscent of the biblical tale of the Good Samaritan (vs.97ff.) and uses this to develop a moralistic exegesis on the theme of sin and forgiveness, such that the passage becomes in effect an illustration, on the secular level, of the concept of God's divine mercy which underpins the remainder of the poem. He re-inforces the earlier idea (vs.46-50) of the soul being relieved by penitence:

' dar zuo sô starcte in baz  
 diu geistliche triuwe  
 gemischt mit der riuwe.  
 si taten im vil guotes  
 und ervurpten in des bluotes.' (ii)

In another passage reminiscent of the scriptures, Hartmann compares the life of the Christian to that of a traveller on a rough and lonely road. In characteristically evocative imagery the poet describes the difficulties which beset the path to grace and forgiveness:

' sô ist der saelden strâze  
 in eteslicher mâze  
 beide rûch und enge.  
 die muoz man ir lenge  
 wallen unde klimmen,  
 waten unde swimmen,  
 unz daz si hin leitet

(i) Gregorius: vs.37-42 (ii) Ibid., vs.123-7

dâ si sich wol breitet  
 ûz disem ellende  
 an ein vil sîeze ende.' (i)

Finally at the end of the prologue Hartmann characterises his work as being about 'der guote sîndaere', and this concept of a man become good through sinning runs through the poem almost like a leitmotif:

' Hie heben sich von êrste an  
 diu seltsaenen maere  
 von dem guoten sîndaere.. (ii)  
 ez was ein sun daz si gebar  
 der guote sîndaere.. (iii)  
 der guote sîndaere sprach.. (iv)  
 Nû sprechet wie da wære  
 dem guoten sîndaere.. (v)  
 des sendet alle gelîche  
 disen guoten sîndaere..' (vi)

A certain dualism in the poet's Weltanschauung is evident in his concept of 'good' and 'evil', represented in his work by the 'got-tiuvel' coupling. God and the Devil, along with Gregorius himself, form the protagonists of the tale, as it were. Hartmann alludes frequently throughout the poem to the influence of the Devil, and to his intervention in human life. He is seen as being involved in a state of continual conflict with God and yet, as the poem relates, being ultimately overcome by God. Hartmann's Christian beliefs almost certainly preclude him from attributing

(i) Gregorius: vs. 87-96 (ii) Ibid., vs. 174-6 (iii) Ibid., vs. 670-1 (iv) Ibid., vs. 2552 (v) Ibid., vs. 2605 (vi) Ibid., vs. 4000

the incestuous lust of the siblings to anything other than the influence of the Devil:

' dō dise wūne und den gemach  
 der werlde vīent ersach..  
 an sīner swester minne  
 sō riet er im ze verre,  
 unz daz der juncherre  
 verkēte sīne triuwe guot  
 ûf einen vālschēn muot..  
 nû begap in der tiuvel nie  
 unz sīn wille an ir ergie..' (i)

The dichotomy of Hartmann's religious outlook exists both on the level of microcosm and macrocosm - within the soul of Gregorius the battle rages, while out in the greater universe God and the Devil are locked in continuous conflict. To the Devil Hartmann attributes the second, unwitting incest and even the original fall of Man from God's grace:

' sīt er des tiuvels rāte  
 nû āber verhenget hāte  
 dāz sī an der sūnden grunt  
 was gevallen anderstunt..  
 daz macheten sīne raete  
 der ouch vroun Êven verriet..' (ii)

Hartmann's 'got-tiuvel' dualism can be seen most clearly perhaps in the passage where he ascribes Gregorius' victory over the besieger to God, and the directly

(i) Gregorius: vs. 303-4, 318-22, 351-2 (ii) Ibid., vs. 2495-8

consequent marriage between mother and son to the Devil. The poet's reasoning seems almost Aquinian: Evil exists in order that Good may prevail, and corollary-wise: from a great evil an even greater good may result. Gregorius' stature in this section of the epic is scarcely more than that of a puppet with control of the strings being disputed by God and Devil:

' den ir got hete gesant  
ze loesen sî unde ir lant  
daz was ir sun Grêgôrjus.  
dar nach wart er alsus  
vil schiere sîner muoter man.  
dâ ergie des tiuvels wille an.' (i)

A third characteristic of Hartmann's ethical outlook, and one which seems to have some affinity with the 'got-tiuvel' polarity, is his concept of the dual nature of man's obligations: to those around him and towards God - 'wider die werlt und wider got'. This concept of Hartmann's is similar to, but slightly more complex than that held by the Greek playwright who conceives offences against the gods as being identical to offences against the natural order and thus as against mankind. Hartmann refers to this two-fold duty in three passages of the poem. Firstly, on discovering her pregnancy, Gregorius' mother remarks to her brother:

'wande ich hân durch dich verlorn  
'got und ouch die liute.' (ii)

Gregorius, when he resolves to engage in hand to hand combat with the rejected suitor who is besieging his  
(i) Gregorius: vs. 2241-6 (ii) Ibid., vs. 441-2



mother's city, gives a double reason for his decision:

' durch got und durch êre  
wolde er verliesen sînen lîp. '(i)

Hartmann further relates how Gregorius' mother by her obstinate refusal to marry after the death of her brother has offended both God and the people over whom she rules. She is advised by her liege lords, after the defeat of the invader to marry:

' daz si noch baz taete  
wider die werlt und wider got  
(si behielte sô baz sîn gebot)  
daz si einen man naeme  
und érbèn bekaeme. '(ii)

To a certain extent it is possible to see in the Gregorius an attempt to reconcile chivalric and Christian ideals: the knightly life is conceived as being secularly symbolic of spiritual striving after the image of God . The admirable and lofty ideals of 'gotes riter', as the poet terms him, are clearly expressed in the words of the dying duke to his son:

' wis getriuwe, wis staete,  
wis milte, wis diemûete,  
wis vrevele mit gûete.  
wis dîner zuht wol behuot,  
den herren starc, den armen guot.  
die dînen: solt dû êren,  
die vremeden zuo dir kêren.  
wis den wîsen gerne bî,  
vliuch den tumben swâ er sî.

(i) Gregorius: vs. 2070-71 (ii) Ibid., vs. 2216-20

' vor allen dingen minne got,  
rihte wol durch sîn gebot.' (i)

The tendency to a blending of spiritual and chivalric may be seen also in the discussion between Gregorius and the abbot, when the latter is trying to dissuade him from abandoning the spiritual life for the worldly: the good knight does not merely embody the finest elements of the knightly code, but through them serves also God:

' ritterschaft daz ist ein leben,  
der im die mâze kan gegeben,  
sô enmac nieman baz genesen.  
er mac gotes riter gerner wesen.' (ii)

An important element of the poet's Weltanschauung as revealed in the Gregorius is the importance which Hartmann attaches to the Church's teaching concerning the problem of sin and expiation. The doctrine states in essence that there is no sin, however heinous, which cannot be wiped out by genuine contrition, penance, confession and the resolution to try to avoid sinning again. These ideas are expressed in the words of Gregorius to his, where he assures her of ultimate salvation:

' jâ hân ich einen trôst gelesen  
daz got die wâren riuwe hât  
ze buoze ûber alle missetât.  
iuwer sêle ist nie sô ungesund,  
wirt iu daz ouge ze einer stunt  
von herzelîcher riuwe naz,  
ir sît genesen, geloubet daz.' (iii)

(i) Gregorius: vs. 248-57 (ii) Ibid., vs. 1531-4 (iii) Ibid., vs. 2700  
-2706

It is important at this stage to attempt to evaluate Hartmann's concept of Gregorius' sin, since this has a direct bearing on the poet's treatment of the problem of expiation. The guilt of Gregorius' parents is unequivocally clear, and Hartmann allows that this is the direct work of the Devil:

' Dô er durch des tiuvels rât  
dise grôze missetât  
sich ze tuonne bewac..  
nû begap in der tiuvel nie  
unz sîn wille an ir ergie..  
der tiuvels schûnde luoder  
begunde si mêre schûnden.' (i)

Gregorius' sin is not that of having been born from an incestuous union, for Hartmann clearly refutes this:

' daz ein kint niene treit  
sînes vater schulde.  
jâ ensol ez gotes hulde  
niht dâ mîte hân verlorn.' (ii)

It is however a matter for disputation whether, by leaving the monastery and exchanging the spiritual life for the secular, Gregorius is guilty of any sin. In a narrow sense, since he was not strictly under any ecclesiastical vow, such a course of action was permissible, however the point remains that by so doing he may have been motivated by sinful hubris. In any case he would have been morally obligated to atone vicariously for the parents' sins, as required of him by his mother on the tablet:

' wûrde ez iemer ze man

(i) Gregorius: vs. 339-41, 351-2, 400-01 (ii) Ibid., vs. 476-9

' daz er laese dar an  
 álle disse geschíht,  
 sô úberhúebe er sich niht,  
 unde wúrde er alsô guot..  
 sô buozte er zaller stunde  
 durch sîner triuwen rât  
 sînes vater missetât.' (i)

Complete expiation then, according to the tablet (and, it follows, Hartmann himself), could only be obtained by both the mother's own atonement and that of her son, in his as yet unblemished moral capacity. Gregorius must learn from the story of the sinful parents to be of humble disposition, and more importantly he is required to lead a life devoted to the vicarious atonement of the parental incest. The opportunity to do just this is offered to Gregorius in the form of the monastic life, but Hartmann seems to suggest clearly that after reading the tablet Gregorius is more concerned with finding evidence of noble lineage than with carrying out the atonement on behalf of his parents. It appears difficult to avoid concluding that he must be regarded as exhibiting sinful pride:

' ich weiz nû daz ich niene bin  
 disse vischaere kint..  
 já ist mîn gir noch merre  
 zuo der werlde dan ê..'(ii)

The allure of the worldly draws Gregorius away from the prescribed course and hence when he rides out, despite the abbot's advice, he falls into danger of mortal sin. In this (i) Gregorius:vs.749-53,756-58 (ii) Ibid.,vs.1495-6,1800-01

respect one may discern a fairly close parallel with the Greek work: it was hubris which led the parents of Oedipus to be presumptuous enough to try to thwart the oracular prediction by exposing their child. The reworking of the parental hubris can be observed in their son: it is Oedipus' pride which leads to the fatal fight with his father, while his offensive arrogance leads him to believe in his own infallibility, and thus directly to the marriage with his mother, since it was his renowned cleverness at riddle-solving which freed Thebes of the Sphinx and enabled him to marry the ruler. Similarly in Hartmann's tale Gregorius, instead of atoning for the parents' sinning, is moved to adopt an apparent attitude of complacency and irresponsibility: God will fix things up and his own penance is unnecessary in addition to that of his parents.

In his prologue Hartmann outlines a programmatic approach to the problem of expiation. The sinner must firstly search thoroughly his own conscience:

' swer sich aber bedenket  
houbethafter missetât..,(i)

Secondly he must be genuinely contrite for the commission of earlier sins:

' ..wuoher der riuwe..,(ii)

Thirdly he must resolve not to sin again, and at the same time trust in God's mercy:

' diu wære triuwe  
ze gote solde hân..,(iii)

Fourthly he must make confession, and, finally do penance:

(i)Gregorius:vs.66-7 (ii)Ibid.vs.75 (iii)Ibid.vs.76-7

' buoze nâch bîhte bestân.' (i)

These then are the five steps which, according to the Church's teaching, had to be carried out in order to achieve complete expiation. As indicated earlier in this chapter, although one may discern a certain similarity between the 'sin' of Gregorius and the offences of Oedipus, there is no such link as far as the expiation of each is concerned: Hartmann assures that so long as the sinner does not succumb to despair and provided he carries out the prescribed steps his salvation will be attained. Sophocles, on the other hand, offers banishment and death to placate the gods for the offences committed.

To summarise: the foregoing has tried to analyse briefly four aspects of Hartmann's outlook which may be elucidated from the Gregorius: these are the poet's generally pervasive moralistic approach to his subject matter; the dualism of his religious outlook; the reconciliation of secular and spiritual elements; and finally the conventional, orthodox programmatic approach to the underlying problem of sin and expiation. (i) Gregorius: vs.78.

. . .

## IV

The following section will attempt to show that the world of Der Erwählte, by contrast with that of the Gregorius, is characterised not by dichotomy, polarity and tension, and by man's striving to regain the likeness of God - the imitatio Christi - but is coloured by a mythicising humanism with which the modern author has sought to re-interpret the old legend.

Mann establishes the mythical perspective right from the beginning of the novel. The initial chapter, Wer Lähutet, is concerned with showing the indeterminateness of place, name, causation and even language:

' Fragt man mich neckend oder boshafte, ob ich selbst etwa zwar wisse, wo ich bin, aber nicht wann, so antworte ich freundlich: Da gibt es überhaupt nichts zu wissen, denn als Personifizierung des Geistes der Erzählung erfreue ich mich jener Abstraktheit, für die ich nunmehr das zweite Merkmal gebe..

..Aber es ist ganz ungewiss, in welcher Sprache ich schreibe, ob lateinisch, französisch, deutsch oder angelsächsisch, und es ist auch das gleiche..

..keineswegs behaupte ich, dass ich die Sprachen alle beherrsche, aber sie rinnen mir ineinander in meinem Schreiben und werden eins, nämlich Sprache.' (i)

In his earlier tetralogy Joseph und seine Brüder there is a passage in the introductory chapter of the Geschichten (i) Der Erwählte: pp.12-13

Jaakobs which similarly expresses this concept of the indeterminacy of time:

' Zu dem Zeitpunkt, da unsere Erzählung beginnt - ein ziemlich beliebiger Zeitpunkt, aber irgendwo müssen wir ansetzen und das andre zurücklassen, da wir sonst selbst 'in den Tagen des Set' beginnen müssten.' (i)

The opening chapter of Der Erwählte sets the whole tone of the re-interpretation of the legend which follows. The novel proceeds on three levels: It follows Hartmann's plot fairly closely: 'gründet sich in den Hauptzügen auf das Versepos Hartmanns', as Mann himself has acknowledged.<sup>(ii)</sup>

Secondly, the novel moves on the level of the narrator - the sceptical and sophisticated monk, Clemens; and finally on the level of the author, who by his mythical-humanising attitude radically reshapes the old tale.

The incest, for the mediaeval poet, was conceived as an event in a sphere of perpetual conflict where God, Devil and Man were seen to be the protagonists: the final outcome being decided within the realm of the Soul. In strong contrast with this, Mann's treatment of the incest has widely-ramified human roots and is based on modern knowledge of instincts and the manysidedness of human nature. In effect Mann supplants the old religious values of Hartmann with a humanism which conceives of man as representing the apex of a pyramid of existence whose lower realms take in animal and vegetative forms of life. Sin is not a sundering of man from God's grace

(i) Joseph und seine Brüder, Stockholmer Gesamtausgabe, Fischer Verlag, 1952, p. 25 (ii) Der Erwählte: Bemerkung dem Inhaltsverzeichnis folgend.



as with Hartmann, but implies in the Mannian system a reversion, or sinking back to a lower stratum of this pyramid. The 'got-tiuvel, lîp-sêle' antitheses lose their Christian connotation and are absorbed and resolved in a total concept of an all-powerful Nature. Thus the author writes of the indifference of Nature to the moral circumstances which led to the birth of Gregorius and his daughters:

' Er war ein Mann, und sie war eine Frau, so konnten sie Mann und Frau werden, denn weiter ist der Natur an nichts gelegen.' (i)

The two early chapters given to the description of the children and their development up to the point where the incest is committed contain a series of animal images which gradually create an erotic atmosphere. To illustrate this: In the initial section of the chapter Die Kinder the twins' hair is likened to the fine down of young chickens:

' Der Kûkenflaum auf ihren Hâuptchen wandelte sich in braunes, glattes Haar.' (ii)

As the babies grow into young children they are seen under another animal image - that of birds:

' Sie hielten sich aber an ihren Hânden..und waren wie ein Paar Zwergsittiche und Gesellschaftspapeganen.' (iii)

In conversation the serving-women describe the twins as turtle-doves:

' 'Nicht wahr, wir sind noch klein?' 'Klein, zwei Turteltûrtel, lieb und edel.' (iv)

(i) Der Erwâhlte: p.176 (ii) Ibid., p.20 (iii) Ibid., p.21 (iv) Ibid., p.22

Mann, in his depiction of the siblings' adolescence, uses plant images and compares the children to young hounds in a passage where the use of other words evokes the world of horses and the hunt:

' ..wurden sie neun und zehn und elf, zwei Knospen, die sich erschliessen wollten..mit seidenen Brauen, regen Augen, dünnen Nüstern, die spürsam witterten..etwas gleich jungen Hunden, die zu schwere Pfoten haben.' (i)

The tourney scene which culminates in the intimate conversation between the brother and sister serves both to intensify the animal-erotic atmosphere and to anticipate scenically the first incest:

' Dein sind die jugendschönsten Beine von allen hier. Nur meine, in ihrer andren Art, sind ebenso schön. Insonders ergreifen mich deine Knie, wenn du jambelierst und deinem Tiere die Schenkel gibst.' (ii)

There is a close interweaving of the words 'mein, dein, Bein', and in the following passage the incest is foreshadowed by the position of the twins and their dog, Hanegiff:

' Sie sassen, die Arme in Sammet und Seide einander um die Schulter gelegt..und lehnten manchmal die hübschen Köpfe aneinander. Zu ihren Füßen hatte sich, Kopf auf den Pfoten, ihr angelländischer Hund gelagert.' (iii)

The incest is further anticipated where Willigis calls Sibylla his 'Schwester-Herzogin':

(i) Der Erwählte: p.22 (ii) Ibid., p.26 (iii) Ibid., p.27

' Dich aber, aller Magde beste, die allein zu mir  
passt, will ich, während sie ihre Mützen in die  
Luft werfen, an meiner Hand durch sie hindurch-  
führen als Schwester-Herzogin.' (i)

The mediaeval poem has an indeterminate time period between the father's death and the sibling cohabitation, but in the modern novel the incest follows directly on the father's death. This shrinking of the time-perspective enables Mann to stylise on the Liebestod theme: The twins are seen as Death's gift in return for the life of their mother:

' 'Aus dem Tode...sind wir geboren und sind seine  
Kinder. In ihm, du süsse Braut, ergib dich dem  
Todesbruder.' (ii)

Grimald's death opens up the possibility for the incest to actually take place, while the coitus, is, itself, immediately preceded by the slaying of the hound.

The succession of animal images which were presented in the preceding sections is continued in the depiction of the incest scene when Sibylla cries out ecstatically:

' O Willo...O schäme dich! Ganz wie ein Hengst, ein  
Bock, ein Hahn! ' (iii)

The whole scene depicting the incest seems to move in conversation, the action being relayed by medium of the siblings' talk. The earlier linking of brother and sister by name (Schwester-Herzogin) is taken a step further when Willigis calls Sibylla his 'süsses Neben-Ich.' (iv) The incest chapter and most of the two chapters which precede it are 'charged', as it were, with a heavily erotic animal vitalism. This deprives the incest of the religious overtone which Hartmann's dualism had conferred on it, and (i) Der Erwählte: p.29 (ii) Ibid., p.38 (iii), (iv) Ibid., p.38

gives it roots in the broad sphere of Nature.

Linked with the animal-erotic theme and complementing it through the earlier part of the novel is the theme of spirituality. The twins' faces are described as having a 'wälsch-elfenbeinernen Blässe' which stands out strongly against the rougher 'Zinnoberfarbe' and the 'Apfelrote' colouring of the parents. Thus the twins are aligned with earlier figures of Mann's work who similarly bear this stamp of the Spirit: Kröger, Joseph, Frau Klösterjahn, Madame Chauchat and particularly the twins in the short story Walsungenblut. (A more detailed comparison of the incest treatment in this story with that of the novel will be made in the following section)

It is not just his physical appearance which links Gregorius (and his parents) with the spiritual; though he is, of course, more highly endowed with the typifying characteristics. Mann uses the leitmotif of the 'festhaltende Hand' to establish even more firmly the Spirit principle. Gregorius is described as possessing to an extraordinary degree the ability to concentrate his vital energies in one point and to hold out tenaciously. It would be tiresome to cite every instance of Mann's use of this motif but two cases seem to be appropriately illustrative: In the fight with his foster-brother, Flann, Gregorius, though lacking the brute animal strength of the former, overcomes him by his 'higher' power:

'..und immer war ihm, als habe Grigorss mit seiner  
nie verzerrten und ungeheuer gesammelten Miene  
und den tiefbrennenden Augen..' (i)

This ability of unusually great power of concentration is

(i) Der Erwählte: p.107

compared by Gregorius to the scientific principle of the magnifying glass:

'Bruder Clamadex hat eine geschliffene Linse, die sammelt die Sonnenstrahlen in ihrem Schliff dermassen, dass, wenn du sie über die Hand hältst, die Hand jäh wegzuckt, vom Glutstrich getroffen, und wenn du sie über Papier hältst oder trocken Gras, es sich schwelend bräunt und raucht und aufflammt in Feuer.' (i)

When Gregorius accepts the Keys from the two Roman emissaries he remarks significantly on his capacity to hold out:

'Kein Eisen brauchte mich festzuhalten an meiner Busse, ich selbst hielt an ihr fest mit festhaltender Hand. Meiner Sündhaftigkeit war es gegeben, mich in jedem Kampf über das übliche Mass zusammenzunehmen!' (ii)

The heavily sensual animal atmosphere which had been built up over the course of the initial six chapters of the novel gradually gives way to an increasing spirituality in the sections which deal with the first exposure and the up-bringing of the young Gregorius. Grigorss shows many similarities to the character of Joseph in the tetralogy. As a youth Joseph is described by disposition as tending to fall into a dreamy half-trance. The same holds in the case of Gregorius: he likes to be alone and to muse dreamily. Both characters are attractive physically and are conscious of this fact. Each excels at formal learning and their brilliance tends to aggravate those of lesser ability around them. Each is, in a sense, a child of Fate: Joseph is consigned to a well, Gregorius to the sea.

Sibylla and Willigis, who earlier had been characterised

(i) Der Erwählte: p.109 (ii) Ibid., p.251

under a series of animal images, now acquire through the awareness of their sinning, a new spirituality. An almost religious atmosphere is brought about in the section where Sibylla speaks of the yet unborn Gregorius:

'...für das ja gar kein Platz ist in Gottes weiter Welt, ausser in meiner Liebe. Denn ich liebe es schon, in seiner Verworfenheit und Unschuld.' (i)

Willigis, too, is 'desensualised', as it were, and endowed posthumously with spirituality when the author, describing his last hours, writes:

'Gar zu leicht erbleichte er, zitterte leicht und war tapfer aber gebrechlich...dies ganz besondere Geschwisterantlitz, diese zum ernsten Mund gewölbte Lippe...dieses witternde Näschen.' (ii)

The former sensual side of Willigis' nature has now receded, and in its place the fine, delicate, artistic type is discernable, which typifies so many of Mann's heroes. The transformation from the animal-vegetative aspect of Nature to its spirituality reaches a highpoint with Gregorius. He towers strikingly above the crude, boorish fisherfolk amongst whom he spends his early life. The isolation of Gregorius is similar in some ways to that of Tonio Kröger. Each has the spirit-typifying characteristic of the oblique posture of the head and the pensive, expectant side-ways glance. There are too their physical similarities, and the love which each has for the sea. Mann describes Gregorius' appearance in the following terms:

'In eine gespannte Stirn fiel sein braunes Haar, das weicher war als das der anderen, und in dem schmalen Gesicht mit der allzu gewölbten Oberlippe.' (iii)

(i) Der Erwählte: p.41 (ii) Ibid., p.64-5 (iii) Ibid., p.99

Tonio is shown as having similar features and even his delicately shadowed eyes have a correspondence in the novel. They are the eyes of Sibylla:

'...unter Tonio's runder Pelzmütze blickten aus einem brünetten und ganz südlich scharfgeschnittenen Gesicht dunkle und zart umschattete Augen mit zu schweren Lidern träumerisch und ein wenig zaghaft hervor..blickte er seitwärts geneigten Kopfes ins Weite. Diese Haltung und Miene war ihm eigentümlich.' (i)

The trait of the sideways glance is observed in both Gregorius and, to a lesser degree, his parents:

'...schon damals hielt er es gern schräg neben der Schulter geneigt und blickte, den Arm zur anderen Schulter hingebogen, die Augen unter dunklen Wimpern verborgen, abseits hinab in einen Traum.' (ii)

And of the parents Mann writes:

' Auch hatten sie beide eine Art, seitlich damit aus dem Winkel zu blicken, als lauschten und warteten sie auf etwas.' (iii)

Towards the end of the chapter Der Faustschlag there is a passage of great significance. Gregorius' stepmother, in a torrent of violent abuse, reveals to the hidden Gregorius that he is an 'Angeschwemmter..weiss doch niemand nicht, wer der ist, noch woher der schwamm..ein armer Findling aus dem Fass, von der Freise.' (iv) Far from being crushed at this revelation, Gregorius realises that 'Tang des Meeres war er nicht, von einem Lande musste er kommen..Ausgesetzt eines dunklen Makels wegen? Aber wo Makel ist, da ist Adel. Niedrigkeit kennt keinen Makel.' (v) Gregorius spends the night under a tree near the beach. He cleanses himself in the sea the next morning and goes to see the Abbot. There (i) Erzählungen, Fischer Verlag, 1958, p. 272 (ii) Der Erwählte: p. 93 (iii) Ibid., p. 20 (iv) Ibid., p. 111-12 (v) Ibid., p. 113

follows a moving scene in which the youth reveals to his spiritual 'father' that he must seek out, come what may, the truth of his origins. Significantly Gregorius raises himself from a submissive, genuflectory position before the Abbot, symbolising physically his confirmed spirituality:

'Damit stand er auf. Vom demütigen Knien erhob er sich, den Fuss fest aufsetzend, und stand da, bleich das schöne Gesicht, worin die Augen bläulich brannten.' (i)

By contrast with the spirituality of Gregorius there is the strongly 'nature-like' character of Frau Eisengrein, whose apparent Christian piety is shown to be a veneer beneath which her love for the natural shows itself. She is described as:

' ..etwas ganz Besondres und dabei Exemplarisches..so war sie weiblich durch und durch, von Wesen und Gesinnung, geschäftig mit ganzer Seele dem Weiblichen zugewandt..Auf die Hervorbringung, so scheint mir, kam ihr alles an..war ihr jede Mutterschaft, auf wie irre Weise sie auch zustande gekommen, ein heiliger Segen und ein Gottesfaktum.' (ii)

Incest and sin as such do not concern Frau Eisengrein, just as Nature does not concern herself with the circumstances which surround the birth of Gregorius and his children:

' ..ihr Gleichmut ist bodenlos..Ja die Natur ist sich selbst einerlei, denn wie könnte sie sonst wohl zulassen, dass ihre eigene Richtung, Zeit und Zeugung sich verkehren und ein vom Weibe Geborener nicht vorwärts zeugt in der Zeit, sondern zurück in den Mutterschoß und Nachfahren erweckt, denen, so zu sprechen, das Gesicht im Nacken sitzt.' (iii)

The link with Nature is maintained in the description of

(i) Der Erwählte: p.115 (ii) Ibid.p.53-53 (iii) Ibid.p.176



the exposure of the infant Gregorius. The small vessel in which he is consigned to the elements is called expressively 'das dralle Füsslein ihm zur Wohnung ein neuer Mutterschoss'.<sup>(i)</sup> Later in the same passage reference is made to 'das bauchige Särgelein',<sup>(ii)</sup> where the use of the adjective maintains the association with Nature and the noun 'Särgelein' evokes the idea of death and resurrection, and in this way recalls to mind the Joseph tetralogy.

The central chapter, Die Busse, has a decisive role in the re-interpretation of the legend. Up to the time of the hero's exposure on the rock, the 'Fleisch-Geist' duality has been evident, though not exhibiting the direct transcendental tension of the mediaeval work. The chapter devoted to penance opens up a far wider sphere - one in which the opposing elements of Spirit and Nature are resolved.

The actual location of the penance scene is significant in the novel. It is not just seen as something which acquires significance in one point of time, but can be interpreted under two aspects: at one end it represents a link with Nature - a nourishing, elemental womb; while at the other extreme, that of the Spirit, its symbolism of the Rock of Peter, the first Pope, is apparent. The rock in the modern novel effectively implies that Nature and Spirit are not irreconcilable.

The penance chapter opens with the narrator delivering a scholastic and superficially Christian argument. Mann is, however, really trying to achieve quite an opposite effect to what is suggested on the surface: the transcendental deity of Hartmann is carefully supplanted by a humanistic reinterpretation. This is shown by two

(i) Der Erwählte: p.60 (ii) Ibid. p.61

significant 'breaks' with the mediaeval treatment. There is firstly Clemens' 'explanation' of the miraculous sustenance, which effectively makes the reader's belief dependent on the intellectual-aesthetic ability of the author:

' Wenn ich aber den Mut finde, sie (=die Erzählung) auszusagen, so solltest du dich schämen, nicht so viel Mut aufzubringen, sie zu glauben. Nicht voreilig will ich dich einen Zweifler schelten, vielmehr baue ich auf deinen Glauben, genau so weit, wie ich auf meine Fähigkeit baue, das mir Überlieferte glaubwürdig mitzuteilen. Auf diese Fähigkeit aber baue ich sehr fest und also auch auf deinen Glauben. (i)

Secondly, Mann departs quite decisively from the idea of the 'miracle from Above': Gregorius is sustained instead by a natural miracle from Below. This rejection of a divine providence is clearly expressed by the narrator:

' Ihr glaubt es nicht? Ich werde euch dessen versichern, und zwar nicht, indem ich einfach zu dem Trumpf meine Zuflucht nehme, dass vor Gott kein Ding unmöglich und Ihm kein Wunder zuviel ist. Das wäre zwar durchschlagend aber zu wohlfeil.. Ohne Predigt, vernunftgemäss und geruhig will ich den Fragen Rede stehen..Kamen Raben geflogen, ihn zu speisen? Fiel Manna vom Himmel, nur um seinetwillen? Nein, es war ganz anders.' (ii)

Mann's depiction of the penitent exposed on the rock to the elements provides the setting for a striking contrast between the mighty forces of untrammelled Nature, standing above even God, and the spiritual being clad only in his (i) Der Erwählte: p.207 (ii) Ibid. p.208

'Büsserhemd':

'Volle siebzehn Jahre verbrachte er dort ohne eine andere Bequemlichkeit als das Himmelsdach über sich, ohne Schutz weder vor Reif noch vor Schnee, weder vor Regen noch Wind, noch vor Sonnenbrand, bekleidet nur.. (i) mit seinem hârenen Hemd, bei nackten Armen und Beinen.'

The tension between the forces of nature and the penitent spiritual figure of Gregorius which is starkly presented by the author in the early section of this chapter is gradually resolved through the course of the remainder of the chapter. Gregorius, initially described in human form as being 'mutterseelenallein', becomes, fifteen years later, a 'moosiges Naturding', which crawls, sleeps and vegetates:

'Schliesslich, nach etwa fünfzehn Jahren, war er nicht viel grösser als ein Igel, ein filzig-borstiges, mit Moos bewachsenes Naturding.. Unter alldem aber machte das moosige Wesen, wenn es nicht schlief, seinen kriechenden Weg zur Mutterbrust und kehrte gesättigt und etwas sabbernd an den Rand zurück, wo der Büsser einst abgesetzt worden war.' (ii)

It is really only the 'enge Geviert der Kegelplatte' on the rock which guarantees the identity of Gregorius and the shrunken, hairy, horny thing of Nature which vegetates away. The process of the transformation of the spiritual being into a lower vegetative-animal order of existence begins in the passage where Mann describes his second day on the rock:

'..verharrte er am Fleck, sass, die Knie mit den

(i) Der Erwählte: p. 207-8 (ii) Ibid., p. 213-4

'Armen umschlungen, oder kniete auch mit gefalteten Händen.' (i)

Gregorius' posture and the gestures of prayer may be read at face value, that is, they may be seen as being consistent with the expected behaviour of a deeply penitent man; but on another level it is possible to see in them the bearing of the child and the embryo: the pre-form of the human. The latter interpretation seems to be strengthened by a later passage where the embryonic image is unmistakable:

'..lag der Mann in sich selbst zusammengezogen, die Knie am Mund.' (ii)

The reversionary process is continued where Gregorius is pictured as crawling around on all fours, almost unknowingly and unwillingly:

'..fast ohne Wissen und Wollen, auf allen Vieren, da er mit seinen Füßen im Eisenhalter nicht einen Schritt tun konnte, auf der Plattform suchend umherzukriechen begann.' (iii)

Prior to this passage Mann's depiction of the nourishment had been on a realistic level, but this too is now gradually changed onto a mythical plane. Mention is made at first only of the 'nass, trüb, milchig' qualities of the 'Steinsaft' which Gregorius laps up and dribbles from his mouth just as a baby or animal might:

'..weisslich trübes Nass bis zum Rande..nur eben auffallend trüb und milchig..Darum beugte er sich ..und schlürfte mit Lippen und Zunge, was darin war, schlappte es aus, so wenig es war..und leckte wahrlich den Grund des Grübchens noch ab..und etwas von dem Getrunkenen floss ihm aus der Munde

(i) Der Erwählte: p. 208 (ii) Ibid., p. 212 (iii) Ibid., p. 208 (iv) Ibid., p. 209

hervor' (i)

The rock has virtually become a kind of protective Nature-womb, nurturing the crawling, slobbering Gregorius. The sustaining liquid is expressively termed 'Steinsaft', and there is thus taking place simultaneously a second type of parallel transformation: Just as the spiritual human becomes an animal-like thing of Nature, the rock itself, representing inanimate, unfeeling Nature, assumes a maternal, nourishing role, sustaining Gregorius with what Mann calls 'Frühnahrung des kleinen unfertigen Frühmenschen.' (ii) Again towards the end of the chapter the author speaks of the 'kriechender Weg zur Mutterbrust', (iii) thus confirming the link with Nature.

An earlier passage in the chapter Die Hochzeit contains a reproof of Nature for her indifference to the Moral-Spiritual:

'Mein Geist will sich nicht finden in die Natur,  
er sträubt sich. Sie ist des Teufels denn ihr  
Gleichmut ist bodenlos.' (iv)

Die Busse shows a very different concept of Nature. Nature has now come to represent agreement, harmony and conformity, encompassing and resolving within herself the animal-spiritual conflict. Nature is presented as the final reality, as a vital, dynamic force with which Gregorius has become one. An earlier explanation of the time dimension had been put forward by Clemens in pseudo-scientific terms:

'Zweitens aber will Zeit, wenn sie nichts weiter ist  
(i) Der Erwählte: p. 209 (ii) Ibid., p. 211 (iii) Ibid., p. 214  
(iv) Ibid., p. 176

'als das und keinen Gegenstand hat als den Wandel der Jahreszeiten und die Mienen des Wetters, keinen Gehalt an Ereignissen, der sie überhaupt erst zur Zeit macht, -Zeit, sage ich, will dann wenig besagen, sie bÜsst an Dimension ein und schrumpft zusammen.' (i)

This compression of time to give the mythical perspective recalls a similar passage in the first novel of the Joseph tetralogy where reference is made to the elapse of the twenty or so generations before the time of Joseph:

'...so ist doch Bedeutung, Schwergewicht und ErfÜlltheit der Erdenzeit nicht immer und überall ein und dieselbe; die Zeit hat ungleiches Mass..sechshundert Jahre wollten dazumal und unter jenem Himmel nicht das besagen, was in unserer abendlichen Geschichte sind; sie waren ein stilleres, stummeres, gleicheres Zeitgebrente; die Zeit war minder tätig, die Ändernde Wirksamkeit ihrer steten Arbeit an Dingen und Welt geringer und milder.' (ii)

After a period of fifteen years Gregorius has the appearance of a 'moosiges Naturding', and time itself is measured only in the mythical succession of the seasons:

'Zeit kannte es nicht. Der Mond wechselte. Die Sternbilder stellten sich um, verschwanden vom Himmel und kehrten wieder. Die Nächte, mondhell oder finster und triefend, eisig durchstürmt oder voll Schwüle, verkürzten sich oder nahmen zu. Der Tag graute früh oder spät, errötete, flammte auf und verging wieder in schneiderndem Karmesin.' (iii)

Nature is now presented in lyrical terms and the poetic is

(i) Der Erwählte: p. 213 (ii) Op. Cit. p. 17 (iii) Der Erwählte: p. 214

united with the mythical. The same passage of the chapter concludes with the image of a unified world of Nature which is seen as cosmic harmony:

' Danach war alles gut, Friede, ebenso hehr und unbegreiflich wie die vorherige Wut, erfüllte das All, und in süßem, oben durchsonnten Regen stand von einer Uferlosigkeit zur anderen in feuchter Schöne der siebenfarbige Bogen.'<sup>(i)</sup>

The break with the mediaeval treatment is decisive. Hartmann's Gregorius finds God's grace through the concept of the 'imitatio Christi' - the Passion of Christ; the mossy, shrunken Grigorss of Thomas Mann lacks any similarity to the mediaeval penitent. He has long since shed his iron leg-fetters, and even while he was chained Mann makes no reference to the chafing and protracted bleeding which Hartmann has:

' dâ hete si im ob dem vuoze  
daz vleisch harte unsuoze  
unz an daz bein vernozen,  
sô das sî was begozzen  
mit bluote zallen stunden  
von den vrischen wunden.'<sup>(ii)</sup>

The recovery of the key consequently loses most of its significance in the chapter following Die Busse.

The final chapter of the novel confirms Mann's mythicising of the old legend. The setting for the final meeting between mother and son is carefully prepared. The actual scenic construction is very important: Mann describes how Sibylla is conducted from one papal ante-chamber to the next:

' Sibylla aber schritt weiter..dem Curopalata, denn  
(i) Der Erwählte: p.214 (ii) Gregorius: vs.3449-56

'fern davon, dass das Geheime Vorzimmer schon vorm Innersten gelegen gewesen wäre! Es stiess davon noch ein Saal und an den noch einer, die zu gar nichts dienten, als Abstand zu bilden, und an den stiess ein kleiner, noch einmal mit einem Thron, auch nur dem Abstand dienend.'<sup>(i)</sup>

In this way Mann scenically anticipates the intimacy of the conversation which will follow: the penetration into the innermost, deepest parts of the soul. The appearance of the Pope enables Mann to focus attention again on the physical characteristics which typify the spiritual:

'..ernst lag die etwas weit vorn an der Nase ansetzende Oberlippe auf der unteren. Die dunklen Augen aber erschimmerten.'<sup>(ii)</sup>

The motif of the 'festhaltende Hand' recurs too when the author describes the firmness of the Pope's glance:

'.. wie sie der Büsserin entgeschauten, in Tränen, ohne dass ihr Blick sich dadurch entfestigt hätte, was rar und schön ist: fest blicken durch Tränen.'<sup>(iii)</sup>

Mann now relates how the Pope 'mit einer Bewegung, zu rasch fast für seine Würde' raises the kneeling mother. This somewhat too hasty movement of Gregorius' implies prerecognition. Mann further strengthens the mythical-recurrent perspective when he writes of Sibylla's dreamy gaze into indeterminate distance:

'wodurch ja der Blick sehr bald nicht sowohl starr wird als ins Schwimmen gerät, sich an seinem Gegenstande zu brechen und, ihn nicht mehr fassend, in eine unbestimmte Ferne zu gehen scheint.'<sup>(iv)</sup>

(i) Der Erwählte: p.275

(ii) Ibid. p.275-76

(iii) Ibid. p.276

(iv) Ibid. p.276



This passage depicting the mythical depth of the ever-present past recalls a similar section of the Joseph tetralogy where the author refers to the relativity of the time perspective and the dreamy mode of thought of the young Joseph:

'Wenn aber Joseph meinte, das sei gar nicht so lange her, dass das Ungeheuerere geschehen und die Edelrebe entwickelt worden, etwa ein Dutzend Geschlechter vor seinem 'Urgrossvater', so war das ein ganz tr umerischer Irrtum und eine fromme Heranziehung unausdenklicher Urferne.. Wir fragen so in Hinsicht auf den fernen Joseph, dessen Entwicklungsstufe sich, abgesehen von kleinen tr umerischen Ungenauigkeiten.. unterschied.' (i)

The conversation between the Pope and his mother suggests clearly that their relationship was known to them in the period before the discovery of the incest:

'..denn obenauf stelle die Seele sich an..tief unten aber, wo still die Wahrheit wohne, da habe es gar keine T uschung gegeben, vielmehr sei ihr da die Einerleiheit bekannt gewesen gleich auf den ersten Blick..(ii)

..dein Kind dort, wo die Seele keine Faxen macht, ebenfalls recht gut wusste, dass es seine Mutter war, die er liebte..(iii)

..Seinem Blute aber war die Einerleiheit von Weib und Mutter vertraut, lange bevor er die Wahrheit erfuhr und sich gar kom diantisch dar ber entsetzte..(iv)

(i) Op. Cit., p.27 (ii) Der Erw hlte: p.279 (iii) Ibid., p.280

(iv) Ibid., p.281

Finally Sibylla completes, as it were, the cycle of the myth when she says to the son-husband-pope: 'Ich erkenne Euch immer!' (i). The Joseph tetralogy again sheds light on the author's concept of the everpresentness of the past and the recurrence and transmutability of the mythical form in a passage of the introductory chapter to the Geschichten Jaakobs:

- ' Was uns beschäftigt, ist nicht die beziffbare Zeit. Es ist vielmehr ihre Aufhebung im Geheimnis der Vertauschung von Überlieferung und Prophezeiung, welche dem Worte 'Einst' seinen Doppelsinn von Vergangenheit und Zukunft und damit seine Ladung potentieller Gegenwart verleiht..  
 ..dass das Wesen des Geheimnisses zeitlose Gegenwart ist und bleibt. Das ist der Sinn des Begängnisses, des Festes. Jede Weihnacht wieder wird das welterretende Wiegenkind zur Erde geboren, das bestimmt ist, zu leiden, zu sterben und aufzufahren.' (ii)

In Der Erwählte Mann has achieved a radical re-structuring of the Gregorius legend. The mediaeval Manichean dichotomy of Hartmann, which distinguished sharply between 'created' and 'uncreated' Life, and the 'got-tiuvel, lîp-sêle' polarity and tension have been replaced by a humanistic mythicising: The total concept of Nature which Mann presents perceives no distinction between the Spiritual and the Inanimate, and is characterised by a cosmic unity and harmony.

. . .

The following section will try to trace the motifs and themal correlatives which link the Wälsungenblut - a short story dealing with sibling incest - and the earlier chapters of the novel with which this thesis is concerned.

The opening paragraph of the short story is concerned with establishing a perspective of Nature and sensuality. A heavy atmosphere pervades the Aarenhold household:

'..durch das ganze Haus,dessen gleichmässig erwärmte Atmosphäre durchaus mit einem süssen und exotischen Parfum geschwängert war..' (i)

The primitive,Nature-like setting is further accentuated by the gong-ringing and the choice of the adjective 'kannibalisch':

'..Der erzene Lärm,wild,kannibalisch und übertrieben für seinen Zweck,drang überall hin..' (ii)

The house itself is lavishly and extravagantly furnished. Aarenhold comments modestly to Beckerath:

' Sehen Sie..Ich bin nun seit manches Jahr in der Lage,mir einige Annehmlichkeiten des Lebens zu gönnen..' (iii)

Each item of furnishing is described as 'so kostbar und schön,dass es sich anspruchsvoll über seinen dienenden Zweck erhob,verwirrte,Aufmerksamkeit verbrauchte.' (iv)

The outfitting of the ducal castle where Willigis and Sibylla grow up is similarly luxurious and exotic:

'..die Truhen barsten von Linnen und Damast,Seiden- und Sammetstoffen seltener Art,Fischotterbälgen auch und duftigem Zobel,dass die Gestelle und

(i) Erzählungen,Fischer Verlag,im Stockholmer Gesamtausgabe,p.380 (ii)Ibid.,p.380 (iii)Ibid.,p.384 (iv)Ibid.,p.392

'Kredenzen prangten im Schein von Assagauker Prachtgerät, als: Schalen, aus Edelsteinen gehöhlt, und Goldpokalen, die Schübe den Vorrat kaum bargen an Spezereien, mit denen man die Lüfte würzte, die Teppiche bestreute und die Ruhebetten bestäubte.' (i)

Paralleling the extravagant décor of each household is the richly colourful clothing of each set of twins. The short story has the following description of Sieglinde's and Siegmund's attire:

'..sie trug ein bordeauxrotes Samtkleid..im Schnitt der florentinischen Mode von Fünfzehnhundert sich nähernd. Er trug einen grauen Jackett-Anzug mit einer Krawatte aus himbeerfarbener Rohseide, Lackschuhe..und Manschettenknöpfe, die mit kleinen Brillanten besetzt waren..' (ii)

..Er stand dort ein wenig bunt, in rosaseidenen Unterbeinkleidern und Socken, roten Saffian-Pantoffeln und einer dunkel gemusterten wattierten Hausjacke mit hellgrauen Pelzaufschlägen..' (iii)

..Sie trug ein Kleid aus seegrüner, glänzender Seide, dessen eckiger Halsausschnitt von einer breiten Ekru-Stickerei umgeben war. Zwei gestickte Pfauen hielten oberhalb des Gürtels in ihren Schnäbeln eine Girlande.' (iv)

The tourney scene in Der Erwählte presents a brilliantly coloured picture of Sibylla's clothing:

' ..so war sie angetan mit einem Kleide, so grün wie Gras, aus Assagauker Sammet, schön weit und lang und luxuriös gerafft, und wo es vorn in breiten Falten

(i) Der Erwählte: p.17 (ii) Ibid., p.381 (iii) Ibid., p.390 (iv) Ibid., p.395

' gerafft war, sah man, dass das Futter aus roter und das Unterkleid aus weisser Seide war. An ihrem elfenbeinernen Halse schloss es rund und war, wie an den Handgelenken, mit Perlen und Steinen gesäumt, die tiefer auf der Brust zu einem breiten Geschmeide zusammentraten. Dicht besetzt mit Edelsteinen war auch ihr Gürtel, und der Jungfrauenkranz in ihrem offenen Haar, er ebenfalls, bestand aus kleinen Rubinen und Granatstein grün und rot.' (i)

In physical appearance the twins in each work have marked similarities. Each set has much the same features: dark eyes and hair, sensual lips and prominent cheekbones. They are described physically as being slender and fine-boned. The appearance of the twins in the novel has been described earlier; the short story pictures the twins as follows:

' Sie hatten dieselbe ein wenig niedergedrückte Nase, dieselben voll und weich aufeinander ruhenden Lippen, hervortretenden Wangenknochen, schwarzen und blanken Augen.' (ii)

Not only physically but also in certain behavioural traits each set of twins is linked. The ducal offspring go hand in hand everywhere, even as adolescents:

' Sie hielten sich aber an ihren Händen auf Schritt und Tritt..' (iii)  
 ..wie es doch so viel schöner wäre, wenn sie zu zweit nur, Hand in Hand, die Rampe hinunterschritten. (iv)  
 ..an einander, schritten zur Tafel Hand in Hand.' (v)

This same habitual handlinking is seen in the case of the twins in the Wälsungenblut:

(i) Der Erwählte: p.25-6 (ii) Ibid., p.381 (iii) Ibid., p.21 (iv) Ibid., p.31 (v) Ibid., p.40

'...sie kamen zuletzt, Hand in Hand... Und sie hielten einander beständig daran, worin sie nicht störte, dass ihrer beider Hände zum Feuchtwerden neigten... Sie hielten einander zwischen den Stühlen an ihren schmalen und feuchten Händen...' (i)

In both the novel and the short story the twins are 'sensualised', as it were, by the introduction of a series of animal images. The process has been traced in the novel in the preceding chapter where Sybilla and Gregorius were seen variously as 'Küken, Zwergsittiche Papeganen, jungen Hunden, Turtel-Türtel'. The Wälsungenblut contains a series of similar animal pictures. The twins are firstly called 'grazil wie Gerten',<sup>(ii)</sup> while a little later the sister's glance is described as a 'glänzend ernsten Blick, der diese drei Sekunden lang begrifflos redete wie der eines Tieres'.<sup>(iii)</sup> This phrase is exactly repeated a few pages later in the story (394) when reference is made to the relationship between Sieglinde and Beckerath, her fiancé. The twins are later seen as two pampered, playful puppies:

'Mit einer süssen Sinnlichkeit liebte jedes das andere um seiner verwöhnten und köstlichen Gepflegtheit und seines guten Duftes willen. Schliesslich spielten sie wie kleine Hunde, die sich mit den Lippen beißen.' (iv)

Sieglinde's eyes are 'gross' and 'feuchtschwarz',<sup>(v)</sup> and the twins are seen as 'warm vermummten, seltsamen Geschöpfen'.<sup>(vi)</sup> Siegmund's room overlooks the Tiergarten and is dominated by a large bear-skin rug.

The motif of the vacant stare is not found so strongly in the novel. There it is seen to be more an inclined posture (i) Erzählungen: pp. 381, 382, 386 (ii) Ibid. p. 381 (iii) Ibid. p. 386 (iv) Ibid. p. 396 (v) Ibid. p. 407 (vi) Ibid. p. 405.

of the twins' heads and an expectant, dreamy gaze. In the short story, Sieglinde's glance is termed 'erwartungsvoll, stumm, begrifflos'.<sup>(i)</sup> In the former work, spirituality is implied while in the latter, the trait serves to intensify sensual qualities.

A further link between the twins in each work is their all-exclusive mutual attention. To cite just two instances of this from the novel: in the tourney scene in the chapter Die Kinder Willigis remarks to his sister:

' Ich habe keine Augen gehabt für ihre prätendierende Wätlichkeit. Ich habe nur Augen für dich, die du mein weiblich Gegenstück auf Erden...Ich dagegen weise ihr die kalte Schulter, que plus n'i quiers veoir als dich..'<sup>(ii)</sup>

The twins in the short story have the same tendency to shut out those around them:

' Zuweilen fanden sich ihre Blicke, verschmolzen, schlossen ein Einvernehmen, zu dem es von aussen nicht Wege noch Zugang gab...'<sup>(iii)</sup>  
 ...Sie atmeten im Gehen den holden Duft mit wollüstiger und fahrlässiger Hingabe, pflegten sich damit wie egoistische Kranke, berauschten sich wie Hoffnungslose, wiesen mit einer inneren Gebärde die übelriechende Welt von sich weg und liebten einander um ihrer erlesenen Nutzlosigkeit willen.'<sup>(iv)</sup>

Allied to the exclusion of others is the twins' habit of referring in a derogatory way to those around them. Again the tourney conversation of Der Erwählte illustrates this well. Sibylla and Willigis alternate in disparaging some of the knights and ladies who had participated in the

(i) Erzählungen:p.394,386. (ii) Der Erwählte:p.29.

(iii) Erzählungen:p.386. (iv) Ibid.p.394.

tourney:

- ' ...wie komisch Graf Kynewulf von Niederlahngau, 'Kurzibold' geheissen ob seiner Kleinheit, auf seiner riesigen Rappenstute sich ausnahm, und wie Herr Klamide, fils du comte Ulterlec, im Strauchelsturz unter sein Ross zu liegen kam, worüber Frau Garschiloye fast den Verstand verlor.... (i)
- ...Alisse von Poitou in dem Narrenkleide, worin sie sich spreizte...Es fanden sie viele so wätlich.. (ii)
- ...für solche Trümmer wie Herrn Rassalig von Lothringen, zweimal so hoch und dick wie ich, der nicht viel feister als eine Gerte... (iii)

Mann writes of the twins in the Wälsungenblut:

- ' ...was sie sprachen, war scharf und funkelnd gefügt; es traf die Menschen, die ihnen begegneten, die Dinge, die sie gesehen, gehört, gelesen hatten und die von anderen gemacht waren, von jenen, die dazu da waren, dem Wort, der Bezeichnung, dem witzigen Widerspruch ein Werk auszusetzen... (iv)
- ...'Beckerath', sagte er, 'ist die trivialste Existenz, in die ich Einblick gewonnen habe... (v)
- ...sahen sie abseits mit einer Art von Verachtung zu, wie die Menge von Eile ergriffen wurde... (vi)

The tourney scene of the novel and the Walküre scene of the short story perform a similar role in the plot construction of each work. Mann uses each to anticipate scenically the incest which follows. The links in the novel have been outlined earlier: the siblings' conversation, their posture, the hound between them, all have their counterpart in the actual incest. Willigis foreshadows the sinning when he

(i) Der Erwählte:p.27.(ii) Ibid.p.28.(iii) Ibid.p.28.

(iv) Erzählungen:p.394.(v) Ibid.p.395. (vi) Ibid.p.403.



says to his sister:

' Wenn man uns nur nicht trennt... vor der Zeit,  
von der ich nicht wissen will, wann sie  
gekommen sein wird...<sup>(i)</sup>  
...da wir...zusammen aus dem Tode geboren...Dich  
aber will ich...an meiner Hand als Schwester-  
Herzogin.'<sup>(ii)</sup>

The incest within the opera is enacted on a bearskin:

' Sie kauerten auf dem Bärenfell, sie sahen sich an  
im Licht und sangen sich süsse Dinge. Ihre nackten  
Arme berührten sich, sie hielten einander bei den  
Schläfen, blickten sich in die Augen und ihre  
Münder waren sich nahe beim Singen. Ihre Augen  
und Schläfen, Stirnen und Stimmen, sie verglichen  
sie miteinander und fanden sie gleich...<sup>(iii)</sup>

While the real incest is similarly performed on Siegmund's  
bearskin rug the twins remark on their likeness:

' 'Du bist ganz wie ich', sagte er mit lahmen Lippen...  
Alles ist...wie mit mir'...  
Sie küsste ihn auf seine geschlossenen Augen; er  
küsste sie auf den Hals unter den Spitzen des  
Nieders. Sie küssten einander die Hände...<sup>(iv)</sup>

The incest reaches a sexual climax: 'sie...verloren sich  
in Liebkosungen, die übergriffen und ein hastiges  
Getümmel wurden und zuletzt nur ein Schluchzen waren.'<sup>(v)</sup>

This climax is anticipated musically in the opera:

' ...er streckte trunken die Arme nach ihr, seiner  
Braut, sie sank ihm ans Herz, der Vorhang rauschte  
zusammen, die Musik drehte sich in einem tosenden,  
brausenden, schäumenden Wirbel reissender

(i) Der Erwählte:p.28 (ii) Ibid.p.29 (iii) Erzählungen:p.402  
(iv) Ibid.p.410 (v) Ibid.p.410.

' Leidenschaft, drehte sich, drehte sich und stand mit gewaltigem Schlage still.' (i)

During the opera scene Sieglinde remarks to her brother: (they are watching the scene where Hunding, after grudgingly giving Siegmund lodging for the night, sends his wife to bed) -

' 'Sie kommt gleich wieder zurück zu ihm.', (ii)

This comment, read in the light of the twins' prior knowledge of the Walküre, anticipates the later scene where, on returning home from the opera, Siegmund goes off sulkily to bed to await the coming of his sister.

The musical foreshadowing of the sexual climax in the Wälsungenblut has its counterpoint in the novel where it is related that the childrens' bedroom is situated 'oben im Käuzchenschreien Turm.' (iii) The death of their father is followed almost immediately by the incest, which is itself preceded by the screeching of owls and the drawn-out howling of the hound. Sibylla says to Willigis as he enters her bed:

' 'Eine Freude wäre mir das, wenn nur nicht um den Turm die Käuzlein so ängstlich schreien wollten.', (iv)

The incest treatment in the short story and the first instance of incest in the novel enable the author to stylise on the Liebestod theme: in the novel there is the father's death, Willigis' killing of his hound, and his remarks to Sibylla to the effect that they were 'aus dem Tode geboren.' As they begin to commit the incest the brother says:

' ..du süsse Braut, ergib dich dem Todesbruder..

...'bedenke', hauchte sie, 'dass er erst heute

(i) Erzählungen: p.403 (ii) Ibid., p.402 (iii) Der Erwählte: 21 (iv) Ibid., p.37

' starb und drunten starr liegt in Parade.Lass, die Nacht gehört dem Tode.' (i)

In the short story the opera itself provides the themal correlative with the Liebestod motif.

There remains a final link between the two treatments of incest. In the novel, the narrator tells of the restless condition of the twins before the incest, and in Willigis' case the underlying sexual urge can be seen:

'Sie aber konnten nicht schlafen, sondern lagen mit offenen Augen oder drückten diese nur manchmal gewaltsam zu..Willigis, erregt von seinem Vaters Tode und dem eigenen Leben, stöhnte unter dem Pfahl im Fleisch und unter Valandes Stachel.' (ii)

Siegmund, on arriving home from the opera, exhibits a similar restlessness:

'Er warf den Frack ab..streckte sich auf die Chaiselongue, setzte sich auf, versuchte die Seitenlage..warf sich wieder auf den Rücken und blieb, die Hände unter dem Kopf, eine Weile so liegen.' (iii)

The foregoing are the main themal and motif correspondences which may be discerned between the two treatments of incest by Mann. The segment of the novel devoted to the first incest cannot be viewed in isolation from the work as a whole. It is largely concerned with setting the perspective for the author's re-interpretation of the legend. This re-structuring was examined in the preceding chapter of this thesis. The short story would appear to be almost certainly a treatment of the Art-

(i) Der Erwählte: p.38 (ii) Ibid., p.36 (iii) Erzählungen: p.408

Life-Nature complex with which so much of Mann's earlier work was concerned: another short story - Der Tod in Venedig - springs to mind. Aschenbach and Siegmund are both representative of Mann's concept of the purely aesthetic an an 'unhealthy' aspect of Nature, and each has his counterbalance in a character which stands for the 'healthy', positive, forceful aspect of Nature: Beckerath in the Walsungenblut and Tadzio in Der Tod in Venedig.

. . .

## VI

The preceding chapters have been concerned with examining the themes and motifs which link each work, and with surveying the ethical and metaphysical views of each author. This section and the following two will attempt to analyse the artistic merits of each work and compare and contrast the authors' techniques. Since the Greek work has been studied in translation, the comments on artistic merit will necessarily be confined to non-linguistic aspects such as plot-construction and character-drawing rather than the playwright's style.

The Oedipus Rex has been acknowledged as a masterpiece of tragic composition. Its greatness derives not only from its incisive analysis and insight into human motive and circumstance, but also from its carefully-formulated plot. Since the Theban legend, in outline at any rate, was already known to his audience, it would appear that Sophocles' aim was not so much to create situations of suspense, though he does this brilliantly, but to present to the audience his own dramatic interpretation of the Theban myth for objective contemplation and judgment, and to display the main characters in situations where their weakness and greatness become apparent. This prior knowledge of the legend by the audience enables Sophocles to use very effectively the technique of dramatic irony.

Sophocles' dramatic technique is aimed at presenting no more than one or two great tragic figures within one play. Three distinguishing characteristics would appear to mark the Sophoclean hero: frankness, fortitude and a sensitive pride. To exemplify this from the Oedipus Rex:

Oedipus' outspoken frankness is well illustrated early in the play when he commands Creon to reveal to the people of Thebes the news of the oracle, regardless of what it may have to say concerning Oedipus himself:

Oedipus: 'And the answer? You hold me between fear and hope. The answer?

Creon: I will tell you - if you wish me to speak in the presence of all. If not let us go in.

Oedipus: Speak before all. Their plight concerns me now, more than my life.' (i)

His fortitude shows itself when he is driven into exile. He is sensitively proud about his skill at solving riddles and about the problem of his birth:

' There was a riddle too deep for common wits; a seer should have answered it; but answer came there none from you.. Until I came - I, ignorant Oedipus, came - and stopped the riddler's mouth, guessing the truth by mother-wit, not bird-lore.' (ii)

Sophocles' political ideal is the ruler who governs kindly and justly in the best interests of his people. This ideal finds skilful artistic embodiment in the playwright's portrayal of the conflicting characters of Oedipus and Creon. Creon is a less complex figure than Oedipus. He places the welfare of the state above all else, and is thus depicted by Sophocles as a 'tyrannical' figure: one who regards the city as the property of the ruler. For Creon the worst evil is anarchy. Oedipus stands in strong contrast to Creon. Although he sometimes shows a tendency to tyranny - as for example in his dealings with Teiresias and Creon, and in his fears for his own safety - he is, in the main, portrayed as a kind and just

(i) The Theban Plays: p.28 (ii) Ibid., p.36

ruler. For the sake of his subjects he is determined to exact the truth from Teiresias. There is a kind of balancing out, as it were, between Oedipus and Creon. The former is a good ruler in spite of his defects of pride and arrogance while the latter is a tyrant although he has certain commendable virtues.

Sophocles' characters conform in the main to his own ideals. But while each of his characters illuminates a facet of Sophocles' outlook, the didacticism is well concealed and does not intrude into the play to the extent of detracting from its artistic completeness. In general his characters have a triple obligation: to family, state and religion. Their religious outlook varies from the deep piety of Antigone to the scepticism of Creon. Oedipus himself is basically religious - he goes into exile because he fears the oracle will come true. He pursues Laius' murderer in accordance with the oracle's command. Only in times of extreme stress and torment does his belief in the gods waver, as for example when he refuses to believe in Teiresias' power after the seer has told him the truth about his birth:

' What was your vaunted seercraft ever worth? And where were you when the dog-faced Witch was here? Had you any word of deliverance then for our people?' (i)

And again when he hears of Polybus' death he scoffs at the oracle (p.52, quoted in ch.2).

It is in scenes such as these that Sophocles shows his consummate skill in the technique of dramatic irony. The audience knows, unlike Oedipus, that it is the blind Teiresias who 'sees', while Oedipus, renowned for his skill

(i) The Theban Plays: p.36

and farsightedness, is blind to the truth and curses Teiresias to no avail. A powerful tension results which is heightened even further in the ensuing scene where the apparently 'good' news of the death of Oedipus' father elates Oedipus and has just the opposite effect on the audience with its prior knowledge of the story.

It is in his depiction of Oedipus that Sophocles' skill at character drawing is displayed at its best. Oedipus is perhaps the most complex figure in the play. He has virtues: spirit, energy, frankness and idealism which are offset by his vices- arrogance, violence, haste and inflexibility. To do justice to the complexity of his hero Sophocles has carefully chosen minor characters who have qualities in opposition to or in sympathy to a lesser degree with those of Oedipus and which serve to throw light upon the various facets of the central figure. The playwright's art in character-drawing resides in the peculiar and distinctive skill with which he blends, as it were, the vices and virtues of his characters to lend them greater individuality. The chorus is another effective tool which Sophocles uses to create dramatic tension within the play. The chorus has a dual function. On the one hand it has the role of commentator, presenting in its lyric odes the principal themes of each scene, while on the other hand it may be viewed as having a normative function in the sense that the audience can measure, from an ethical viewpoint, the actions of the players in the light of the choric commentaries. An example of this latter role may be seen in the ode concerning oracles. To the Greek audience the words of the chorus would indicate that in this



particular scene Oedipus and Jocasta are to be looked upon as impious. It is also significant that this choric ode immediately precedes the dramatic entrance of the messenger bearing the news of the death of Oedipus 'father', and thus the terrible denouement is lyrically foreshadowed:

' Pride breeds the Tyrant; swollen with ill-found booty, from castled height Pride tumbles to the pit, all footing lost. Zeal, stripped for civic duty, no law forbids; may God still prosper it. Who walks his own high-handed way, disdainning true righteousness and holy ornament; who falsely wins, all sacred things profaning; shall he escape his doomed pride's punishment?' (i)

The audience is called upon to judge the actions of the main characters from the viewpoint of the chorus which, like the audience itself, vacillates in its sympathies. This is observed in the Antigone where the chorus, although forced to condemn the heroine for her disobedience to Creon as ruler, is sympathetic to her own tragic conflict between love for her brother and moral obligation towards the state. In the Oedipus Rex the chorus is actually implicated in the events and its mood changes with them. The chorus has little time for reasoned reflection and objective judgment. Some of these mood changes which Sophocles cleverly weaves into the texture of the play are the following. Firstly, a mood of fear is shown vividly in the opening choric ode:

' With fear my heart is riven, fear of what shall be told. O Healer of Delos, hear! Fear is upon us. What wilt thou do?' (ii)

(i) The Theban Plays: p.49-50 (ii) Ibid., p.30

This mood of fear later changes to one of doubt of the gods' justice:

' Zeus! If thou livest, all-ruling, all-pervading,  
Awake; old oracles are out of mind; Apollo's name  
denied, his glory fading; there is no godliness  
in all mankind.' (i)

The chorus' doubt changes again to a mood of disbelief after Teiresias claims that Oedipus is the guilty man:

' Wisdom is given to all in their several degrees.  
I impute no blame until blame is proved.. Never  
therefore will I consent to think him other than  
good.' (ii)

Finally at the end of the Oedipus Rex the chorus assumes a didactic role and states the moral to be drawn from the tale:

' Then learn that mortal man must always look to  
his ending, and none can be called happy, until  
that day when he carries his happiness down to  
the grave in peace.' (iii)

Sophocles' dramatic technique is aimed also at creating and displaying the greatness and weakness of his hero in a number of timeless and universally significant situations. To achieve this he uses two principal methods. The first element of his technique consists in his use of recurrent scenes. Certain types of scene reappear throughout the play. These are of three types: appeals, persuasions and debates. An example of appeal may be seen in the opening scene of the Oedipus Rex, where the priest appeals to Oedipus for help:

' Now, Oedipus, great and glorious, we seek your  
help again. Find some deliverance for us by any  
way that god or man can show. We know that experience

(i) The Theban Plays: p.50 (ii) Ibid., p.39 (iii) Ibid., p.68

of trials past gives strength to present counsel.  
 Therefore O greatest of men, restore our city to  
 life... Save, save our city, and keep her safe  
 for ever.' (i)

Another scene of appeal is in the Antigone where Antigone pleads with Ismene to help her bury her brother:

'Will you help me? Will you do something with me?  
 Will you?... Would you help me lift the body... you  
 and me?' (ii)

A third example of this type of scene can be found in the Oedipus at Colonus when Oedipus begs Theseus to keep secret his burial place:

'Son of Aegeus, what I have now to unfold is a thing  
 that your city shall keep in its secret heart alive  
 to the end of time. Soon I shall take you, none  
 guiding me, to the place where I must die; and no-one  
 else must know it. Tell no man the region where it  
 lies concealed from sight.' (iii)

Scenes of persuasion are found in the Oedipus Rex where Creon tries vainly to convince Oedipus that he has falsely accused him of plotting against the throne. Later in the same play a messenger fails to persuade Oedipus of the truth surrounding his exposure and adoption. Scenes of debate may be seen in the Oedipus Rex when Teiresias and Oedipus argue vehemently after the seer has revealed that Oedipus is the killer of Laius. Another debate scene occurs in the Antigone where Creon and Antigone dispute over the guilt of Polynices. Through the use of these recurrent scenes of appeal, debate and persuasion Sophocles effectively brings his main characters into interplay with the lesser figures with the result that

(i) The Theban Plays: p.26. (ii) Ibid. p.127.(iii)Ibid.p.117

the story is furthered and his audience learns more about the principal characters.

The second element in Sophocles' dramatic technique is his use of contrasted characters. The minor characters are carefully chosen so as to display qualities either opposed to or in sympathy with those of the main character. Virtually the whole structure of the Oedipus Rex is built on character contrasts. There is firstly Oedipus and the priest, representing king and subject; secondly: Oedipus and Teiresias, showing a conflict between human skill and supernatural knowledge; thirdly: Oedipus and the Theban herdsman, a contrast of openness and craftiness; and finally Oedipus and Jocasta, where a kinship is shown. Connected with, and reinforcing, this technique of the use of contrasting characters is Sophocles' skilful positioning of scenes in which news is brought which has an opposite effect on the hero and on another character. The emotion of the hero forms a striking contrast to the opposed emotion of the lesser character. The playwright achieves a brilliant dramatic effect, for example, in the scene where the Corinthian messenger's news drives Jocasta to suicide and Oedipus to scorn and elation. The audio-visual impact of this scene on the audience with its prior knowledge of the legend must have been tremendous.

Sophocles' dramatic art is shown then by his ability to display the manysidedness of his hero's character, by his skilful use of recurrent scenes and contrasted characters. The Oedipus Rex may be viewed on two levels: technically it is dramatic art of the highest order, while on the 'ethical' side it is the vehicle for the playwright's views on state, family and religion.

The plot enables a focussing on <sup>the</sup> his hero's personality and thus too, with the chorus, the reader comes to an understanding of the Sophoclean ethic. Sophocles' feeling for form is shown by the definite shape of the plots in the trilogy, by the correspondence and correlation between scenes, and by his skill at displaying his hero's personality in timelessly valid, universal situations, where his tragic greatness and weakness are simultaneously revealed.

...

## VII

In his treatment of the earlier French poem, Hartmann has not basically changed the story as he found it, but has clearly imbued it with his own ethical and artistic interpretation. The work, in itself, represents a significant literary innovation: it is the first courtly legend and as such displays a conscious and artistic blending of the spiritual and secular. What Hartmann has to say he says in economical and uncomplicated terms. His words are carefully chosen so as to match the underlying thought.

Throughout the Gregorius one can discern a skilful alternation of action, scene and narrative: the poet holds the interest of the reader and his story never lags. One may perhaps charge the poet with being overly didactic, but the moralistic tone of the poem is, to some extent, counterbalanced by the warm human touches which he effectively adds. To show just two such passages: the Abbot on first seeing Gregorius is struck by the beauty of the infant. At first sight the babe smiles sweetly, writes Hartmann, moving the Abbot to compassion:

' ein kint, daz im sîn herze jach  
 daz er sô schoenez nie gesach..  
 mit einem süezen munde  
 sô lachete er den abbet an.' (i)

Again in a later passage Hartmann touchingly describes the parting of Gregorius and the Abbot, each unable to take his eyes off the other:

' sine mochten der ougen  
 ein ander niht verlougen

(i) Gregorius: vs. 1033-34, 1038-39

' unz si sich vor dem breiten sê  
enmochten undersehen mē.' (i)

One of the most striking features of Hartmann's character drawing is his love of contrasts. The poem discloses three notable examples of this: Gregorius' parents display great differences - the brother is a weak and vacillating figure. His sister by contrast is shown as having strength of mind which she displays on discovering her pregnancy. Indeed throughout the whole poem Hartmann shows his admiration for womanly fortitude, and in this respect, differs from Thomas Mann, who, in the main, portrays women as being weak and venal. In a characteristically terse couplet Hartmann describes how the sister reproves her brother for his unmanly display of emotion:

' si sprach: "gehab dich als ein man,  
lâ dîn wîplich weinen stân." (ii)

A second example of the technique of character contrast can be seen in Hartmann's portrait of the two fisher-brothers who rescue Gregorius from the sea. The one is poor with many children, while the other is wealthy and has only one daughter:

' Die bruoder wâren ungelîch,  
der eine was arm, der ander rîch.  
der arme bî dem klôster saz,  
der rîche wol hin dan baz  
wol ûber eine mîle zil.  
der arme hete kinde vil:  
der rîche nie dehein kint gewan,  
niuwan ein tochter, diu hete man.' (iii)

(i) Gregorius: vs. 1821-24 (ii) Ibid., vs. 466-67 (iii) Ibid., vs. 1063-70.

Hartmann draws yet a third contrast between the fisherman who shelters Gregorius for a night before his exposure on the rock, and this man's wife. The man is portrayed as more than just mean and narrow-minded - Hartmann has drawn in him a mediaeval portrait of the biblical doubting Thomas, who cannot believe without seeing but whose ruefulness is great when he is finally convinced. The fisherman's wife by contrast is shown as soft-hearted, credulous and compassionate towards the sinner when he asks for shelter. She rebukes her husband for his suspicious meanness towards Gregorius:

' Des ũbelen vischaeres wîp  
 erbarmte sich ũber sînen lîp.  
 si bedũhte ez daz er waere  
 niht ein trũgenaere..  
 swenne dich unser herre  
 dîner saelden ermande  
 und dir sînen boten sande  
 den soldest dũ emphâhen baz.' (i)

This woman embodies precisely the opposite traits of the earlier one - Gregorius' foster-mother - who was portrayed as suspicious, mean, small-minded and grasping.

Hartmann's sense of artistry can be clearly seen in his ability to evoke a scene or mood with a few carefully chosen words which fire the reader's imagination. This ability is particularly apparent in scenes where the poet portrays the emotions of his characters. They are not mere mouthpieces for a moralistic sermon on the theme of sin and forgiveness, but are compelling and life-like figures, having independent stature. The most outstanding of the poet's portraits of emotion are found in those scenes

(i) Gregorius: vs. 2835-38, 2850-53



in which love, envy, anger, compassion, scepticism and suffering are shown. In the early part of his epic Hartmann paints a moving picture of the misguided love of the brother for his sister. Man's love, says Hartmann, runs deeper than woman's, for it alone was enough to kill the brother, whereas Gregorius' mother recovered from four great woes:

' daz ir bruoder waere tôt.  
 der tôt kam im von sener nôt..  
 swie si doch jehen daz diu wîp  
 sêrer minnen dan die man,  
 desn ist niht. daz schein dar an:  
 wande sîn herzeleit  
 dâz im was vûr gespreit,  
 daz was dâ wider kleine,  
 niuwan die minne eine  
 diu im ein zil des tôdes was.' (i)

Equally touching is the portrait which the poet draws of the love between Gregorius and the Abbot, a love which knows no barrier of age:

' swie sêre gescheiden sî diu tugent  
 under alter und under jugent  
 sô ergienc doch von in beiden  
 ein jaemerlîchez scheiden.' (ii)

Particularly effective is the forceful manner in which Hartmann brings out the emotions of envy and malice which Gregorius' foster-mother feels towards him. Above the purely realistic, emotional level, her attitude symbolises the general attitude of ignorance towards learning: a curious blend of envy and suspicion and a

(i) Gregorius: vs. 829-30, 842-49 (ii) Ibid., vs. 1817-20

readiness to condemn in the absence of understanding:

' si sprach: 'wê mir armer, wê!  
 er tumber gouch vil betrogen..  
 dînen vriunden zimet daz niht wol  
 daz ich diz laster dulden sol  
 von einem sô gewanten man  
 der nie mäge hie gewan.' (i)

Hartmann skilfully creates an atmosphere of excitement in the passage where Gregorius' foster-brother runs crying to his mother:

' 'sich, wie weinest dû sus?'  
 'dâ sluoc mich Grêgôrjus.'  
 'war umbe hât er dich geslagen?'  
 'muoter, ich kan dirs niht gesagen.'  
 'sich her, taete dû im iht?'  
 'muoter, weizgot nein ich niht.' (ii)

Another emotion which the poet draws vividly is that of anger coupled with pride. This is brought out well by the forceful tone of the scene where Gregorius suspects that someone has been lying about his birth:

' iu hât etewer gesaget  
 daz ich sî ein ungeboren man.  
 weste ich wer iuch dar an  
 alsus geleidet haete,  
 ezn gelaegen mîne raete  
 niemer unz ûf sînen tôt:  
 nû hel sich wol, des ist im nôt.  
 swer er ist, er hât gelogen.' (iii)

Sometimes the very brevity of Hartmann's style is more evocative than a lengthy description, as for example, where

(i) Gregorius: vs. 1306-07, 1311-14 (ii) Ibid., vs. 1299-1306 (iii) Ibid., vs. 2578-83

he contrasts Gregorius' misery at departing from his mother's land with his former happiness:

' Ez wâren dem rîchen dûrftigen  
alle gnâde verzigen,  
wan daz er al sîn arbeit  
mit willigem muote leit..' (i)

Equally terse yet powerful is the depiction of the agony of mother and son after their marriage is uncovered: Death would have been a welcome guest:

' sich möhte vil nâch der tût  
gemâzet haben ze dirre nôt:  
den haeten si,waere er in komen,  
ze voller wirtschaft genomen..' (ii)

One finds in the Gregorius instances of imagery which the poet has taken from biblical material. To mention just two such passages: There is the earlier mentioned section in the prologue (vs. 96-112) where Hartmann borrows the theme of the Good Samaritan to illustrate his theme of sin and forgiveness, while later in the poem (vs. 2623-2631), when describing the torment of Gregorius and his mother, he compares their grief with that felt by Judas when he hanged himself, and by David when he learned of the death of Jonathan.

The Gregorius has frequent passages displaying the linking of words which are either antithetical or synonymous; the word-pairs being usually linked by 'unde' or 'ode'. The prominent part which antithesis and the pairing of antonyms play in Hartmann's language may well stem from the dualism of the poet's Weltanschauung. Among the more common instances of word-pairing are: 'ledic unde (i) Gregorius: vs. 2751-54 (ii) Ibid., vs. 2641-44

blôz,riuvec und unvrô,lanc unde breit,schoene unde wît,  
trûebe unde naz.' The linking of antithetical words  
occurs less frequently: 'groz unde kleine,alte und junge,  
lebende ode tôt.' Dualism may be discerned too in passages  
where there is a word-play on two opposed concepts.Four  
examples of such word-play stand out.These are:'gedinge-  
vorhte'(vs.112-119),'sêle-lîp(436-451,but mainly merely  
formulaic);liep-leit'(vs.454-56) and 'trûrec-vrô'(vs.1747-  
1755).

Occasionally Hartmann uses the technique of repetition,  
creating a kind of 'montage' effect which heightens and  
intensifies,as for example where he compares the 'broad'  
and 'narrow' ways:

' der enhât stein noch stec,  
mos gebirge noch walt,  
der enhât ze heiz noch ze kalt.  
man vert in âne des lîbes nôt,  
er leitet ûf den êwigen tôt.  
sô ist der saelden strâze  
in eteslîcher mâze  
beide rûch und enge.  
die muoz man ir lenge  
wallen unde klimmen,  
waten unde swimmen..' (i)

Connected with the poet's technique of repetition is his  
use of stichomythia.This technique arouses interest and  
creates dramatic tension.Hartmann uses the dialogue to  
full advantage in the scene where Gregorius reveals his  
identity to his mother.The rapid cross-fire of question  
and answer gains momentum and culminates in the moving  
dénouement:

(i) Gregorius: vs.82-92

' 'genâde, herre, 'sprach daz wîp,  
 'lebet er noch?' 'jâ er.' 'nû wie?'  
 'er gehabet sich wol ûnde ist hie.'  
 'mac ich in gesehen, herre?'  
 'jâ, wol: er ist unverre.'  
 'herre, sô lât mich in sehen.'  
 'vrouwe, daz mac wol geschehen:  
 sît daz ir in sehen welt,  
 sô ist unnôt daz ir des twelt.  
 vil liebiu muoter, sehet mich an.' (i)

Hartmann uses the technique of personification sparingly in the poem. It occurs in three places:

' sît ez mir nû sô geziuhet  
 daz mich diu Saelde vliuhet..  
 An disem ungewinne  
 erzeigete ouch vrou Minne  
 ir swaere gewonheit..  
 Nû hete diu vrouwe Saelecheit  
 allen wîs an in geleit..' (ii)

Despite its moralising and at times sententious tone, Hartmann's poem is clearly an artistic and organic whole, characterised by the poet's skilful treatment of his subject matter, the clarity and purity of his style and the harmonious agreement of word and sense. He shows himself as directly involved with and taking part in the events which he describes (vs. 644-7, 789-804), and by his use of the rhetorical question creates the impression of historical nearness and heightens the reader's awareness.

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(i) Gregorius: vs. 3916-3925 (ii) Ibid., vs. 451-53, 1235-37

## VIII

This final section will attempt briefly to survey and appraise the artistic techniques used by Thomas Mann in his re-interpretation of the Gregorius legend.

The most immediate apparent difference between the mediaeval verse-epic and the modern novel is the relatively greater length of the latter work. To expand a poem of some 4000 odd lines into a novel of nearly 300 pages necessarily implies considerable elaboration and embroidery on the original. This Mann has done, and achieved brilliantly what he set out to do, namely to recast the old legendary material in a completely new light. The underlying ethical and metaphysical aspects of Mann's re-treatment have been examined in an earlier chapter. There corresponds to the basic change in outlook implied in the modern re-formulation a linguistic innovation - the actual form of the language in which Mann casts his tale. The 'mythical' approach is established from the outset. The author has chosen an Irish Benedictine, Clemens, for his narrator, and the indeterminacy of his language has been discussed in an earlier chapter. The actual language used is a curious blend of Modern and Middle High German, Old French and English. It is possible to interpret Mann's linguistic experimentation on the realistic level as being aimed at both creating the impression of mediaeval, courtly, knightly life and at lending his novel the character of the mediaeval epic. I prefer to see it as a kind of linguistic correlative with the underlying change in interpretation of the

legend. The fact that the narrator recounts his tale, not in any particular language (p. 13) but by the medium of 'language' itself implies a decisive break with the mediaeval treatment.

In its basic outline the plot of the mediaeval poem has not been greatly changed by Mann. He has, for example, retained such elements as the papal schism, the curious dream of the two Roman patricians, the miraculous recovery of the key, and the Pope's meeting with his mother. In other sections, however, Mann has greatly expanded the mediaeval treatment. The first such example which comes to mind is the early description of the courtly setting in Aquitania. This is a brilliantly exotic and colourful canvas in the novel. Its function is not merely aesthetic however - it serves to introduce elements which anticipate scenically later events, as for example, the setting of the twins' bedchamber with the owls in the tower above, and the tourney scene both have scenic correlation with the incest. There is further detailed elaboration in the chapters which treat Gregorius' education and his administration as Pope. Of particular significance is the change in Mann's treatment of the central episode dealing with the exposure on the rock. This receives scant treatment by Hartmann but Mann goes into great detail in recounting the nourishment of Gregorius.

Apart from his obvious and acknowledged use of Hartmann's Gregorius as a primary source of material, Mann has borrowed from at least two other Middle High German poets. From the Parzival of Wolfram he has taken much. It is impossible to trace all connections

with this work; however the following are some of the personal and geographical names which derive from Wolfram's work: Garschiloye, Klamide, Assagauk, Belrapeire, Obilot, Mahaute and Feirefiss. This borrowing is especially apparent in Mann's highly technical description of courtly life in the second chapter. From Gottfried's Tristan Mann has taken the nickname for his hero, who is referred to as 'Tristanz, der Sorgsame, qui onques ne trist...denn hiess er 'Der Trauerer''<sup>(i)</sup> The geographical borrowing is not confined to Middle High German works. From the early French religious play Le Jeu d'Adam Mann would appear to have adapted the scene dealing with the tempting of Eve into a dialogue between Sibylla and Willigis in the incest scene:

' "Nen frais pas. J'en duit."

"Fai le! Manjue, ne sez que est. Pernum ço bien  
que nus est prest!"

"Est il tant bon?"

"Tu le saveras. Nel poez saver sin gusteras."<sup>(ii)</sup>

Certain characteristic facial features recur throughout the novel and acquire significance as a kind of typifying constant. The actual recurrent facial similarities are these: pale, ivory-toned complexion, brown hair, blue-black eyes, dark eyelashes and the fine, arched upper-lip. They imply spirituality and are found, in the novel, most fully in Gregorius:

' In eine gespannte Stirn fiel sein braunes Haar,  
das weicher war als das der anderen, und in dem  
(i) Der Erwählte: p. 98 (ii) Ibid., p. 38



' schmalen Gesicht mit der allzu gewölbten Oberlippe, die fest auf der unteren lag, und den dünn fliegenden Nüstern, - in diesem Gesicht, das nicht, wie bei den Gesellen, in der Anstrengung rotputerig aufschwellt, vielmehr noch in mattere Bleichheit fiel, brannten die bläulichen Augen mit sonderlicher Kraft und waren überall.' (i)

In part or in whole these same characteristic features recur in no less than seven other passages of the work (pp. 20, 55, 86, 106, 140, 267 and 269). Indeed they are not confined just to Der Erwählte but form a chain of themes and motifs which link, in this respect, many of Mann's works: Hanno in the Buddenbrooks bears a close similarity to the young Gregorius, with his pale, delicate features and his fear and scorn of the world. Tonio Kröger too shows similar traits of character in his highly-strung, hypersensitive disposition, and in his curious blend of longing for, fear and envy of life. As mentioned earlier, the twins in the Walsungenblut have a very close physical resemblance to the hero of Der Erwählte. The young Joseph of the tetralogy, even if not physically, stands close to Gregorius in other respects, with his early, passionate thirst for knowledge and outstanding scholastic ability.

Linked to some extent with the recurrent facial characteristics is the leitmotiv of the 'festhaltende Hand', though this is confined to Gregorius alone. It is his extraordinary ability to concentrate his energy and vital faculties which enables him to overcome cruder, (i) Der Erwählte: p. 99

rougher, though stronger figures such as Flann and the besieger, Roger. This ability is described in the section of the chapter 'Der Trauerer' which deals with Gregorius' day-dreaming:

'...auf dieselbe Weise nämlich, wie er in Gedanken den Herrn der Quelle überwand, will sagen: weil er es, anders als jene, verstand, beim Kampfspiel jeden Augenblick sein Alles zusammenzunehmen und nicht nur, wie sie, aus Leibeskräften kämpfte..'(i)

This leitmotiv appears, in all, another eight times throughout the novel (pp. 107, 109, 134, 142, 165, 178, 180 and 251).

Though not constituting a leitmotif, one can observe throughout the novel the recurrence of the numbers seven and seventeen. The former occurs in six passages (pp. 7, 49, 214, 132, 169 and 275) while the number 17 is referred to seven times: Grimald outlives his wife by seventeen years, the incest is committed when the twins are seventeen; Gregorius is 17 days old when he is exposed and 17 marks are placed in the chest with him. The fight between Flann and Gregorius takes place when the latter is 17 and is followed by his journey to his mother's land which takes 17 days. Finally he does 17 years penance. (These are not exact parallels with the Gregorius, however the number seventeen does occur at least five times in the poem - vs. 3131, 3139, 3183, 3299 and 3578. Fritz Tschirch has written<sup>(i)</sup> an extremely interesting analysis of number symbolism in the Gregorius which conjectures, inter alia, that Gregorius was aged 15 at the time he left the

(i) F. Tschirch, Spiegelungen, E. Schmidt Verlag, Berlin, 1966, pp. 260-265.

monastery, and that the ensuing marriage with his mother lasted two years before the incest was discovered. This would imply that the penance on the rock began when Gregorius was aged 17; furthermore since he did an equal number of years penance he would thus have been aged 34 at the time of his elevation to the Papacy, the same age at which Christ was reputed to have been crucified, and to have risen from the dead.) The number 7 has of course a long tradition of significance in both Christian and secular mediaeval works.

One of the techniques used by Mann to anticipate much of what comes later is the symbolic dream, of which three instances may be discerned. The first occurs in the third chapter Die Kinder, where Willigis dreams that his father is threatening him:

' Ihm träumte, sein Vater schwebte über ihm mit hinten aufgeschlagenen Beinen in den Lüften, kupferrot angelaufen vor Wut das Antlitz, mit gesträubtem Schnauz, und bedrohe ihn stumm mit beiden Fäusten, so als wolle er ihm stracks damit an die Kehle fahren..träumte es ihm wirklich genauso wieder zum zweiten Mal..schon gleich die nächste Nacht.' (i)

Willigis' dream presages the father's death of a stroke and the incest which occurs immediately afterwards.

A second ominous and symbolic dream is that of Sibylla in the sixth chapter Frau Eisengrein, where she dreams of giving birth to a dragon which later returns and forces itself into the womb again:

' Ihr träumte, sie gebäre einen Drachen, der ihr dabei

(i) Der Erwählte: p. 32

gar grausam den Mutterschoss zerriss. Danach flog er davon, was ihr sehr grossen Seelenschmerz bereitete, kehrte aber wieder und drängte sich zu ihrem noch grösseren Schmerze in den zerrissenen Mutterschoss zurück.' (i)

Her dream clearly foreshadows the return, seventeen years later of Gregorius and her marriage to him.

Finally there is Gregorius' dream in the eleventh chapter, Der Trauerer, which Mann has taken from Hartmann's Iwein, the mediaeval poet in turn having almost certainly adapted it from the Yvain of Chrétien. This dream augurs the future marriage of mother and son. The father figure again looms menacingly but is clearly overcome. (Mann links into this dream too the motif of the 'festhaltende Hand', and it is conceivable that the dream anticipates the turmoil of savage nature and subsequent peace which is portrayed in the central chapter Die Busse.)

In his novel Mann has been highly successful in using the techniques described and discussed in the preceding section to humanise and 'universalise' the old legend. He uses the leitmotiv to signify a 'typifying' constant, as for example where the 'festhaltende Hand' and the recurrent facial features of a particular type symbolise spirituality, while the series of animal images and names conveys sensuality and a lower order in the 'Daseinspyramide'. The symbolic dream and the constant interplay of conscious and sub-conscious motivation and emotion are evidence of Mann's use of sophisticated psychological insight. By the use of a narrator, the author (i) Der Erwählte: p. 55

is enabled to 'distance' himself, as it were, from his matter and the novel thus gains a double perspective, giving scope for a wealth of humour and irony. Mann's talent for synaesthetic description and for evocation of emotion is witnessed throughout the whole work - the depiction of the courtly setting of the ducal castle and the tourney scene are superlative: one can virtually see, smell and feel the objects described.

The chapter Die Busse contains a lyrical passage which, though brief, has surely no equal anywhere else in Mann's writing. This is the passage where the cycle of time and season, and the harmony and peace following the turbulence of the storms is drawn. There is too the brilliantly 'planned' section of the final chapter, Die Audienz, where Sibylla is conducted from chamber to chamber in the papal palace until the innermost privy-chamber is gained - a skilful scenic anticipation of the intimacy of the ensuing conversation between the Pope and his mother. Mann's consummate skill at character drawing is shown in his sympathetic portrayal of minor figures such as the abbot, the fisherman's wife and the Roman patrician, Probus.

The 'kleinen archaischen Roman' which Mann had hoped to make out of the legendary material is surely a lasting testament to his painstakingly detailed craftsmanship, to his profound psychological insight and to his boldly successful linguistic experimentation in re-shaping the old tale in modern form.

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